

## Calero wins: ruled 'not deportable'

The following news release was issued June 1 by the Róger Calero Defense Committee. It was headlined, "Róger Calero, associate editor of *Perspectiva Mundial*, wins victory in fight against Department of Homeland Security effort to deport him: Calero launches tour to bring success in fight against deportation to thousands facing attack."

On May 22 Immigration Judge William Strasser signed a final order terminating the government's effort to deport Róger Calero, associate editor of *Perspectiva Mundial* magazine and staff writer for the *Militant* newspaper. The order reads: "Reason for termination: Respondent is not deportable."

The Department of Homeland Security, which now runs the country's Immigration police and prosecutors, had been trying for six months to have Calero excluded from the country.

He was seized by immigration agents at Houston Intercontinental Airport on December 3, 2002, and thrown into detention. The government told Calero he was slated for expulsion because he had agreed to a plea bargain verdict to a charge of selling an ounce of marijuana to an undercover cop in high school in 1988. Calero had fully informed the Immigration Service of this conviction when he filed for permanent residence in 1989. The government waived his conviction and granted him a green card in 1990. His permanent residence was renewed in 2000. After Calero was arrested at the airport, immigration authorities told him that they could retroactively revoke his green card.

From detention, Calero contacted his magazine and launched a fight for his

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## UK hospital workers strike against two-tier pay

BY AURORA SHANNON  
AND ROSE KNIGHT

LONDON—Cleaners, porters, and catering staff working at Whipps Cross Hospital in Leytonstone went on strike for 48 hours on May 28 and 29. They work for ISS Mediclean, which supplies staff for National Health Service hospitals. The workers, members of the union UNISON, are demanding a pay increase to £5.53 an hour and a guaranteed end to the two-tier wage scale. They are currently paid an average of £4.62 an hour.

The employer has offered them £5 an hour. Don Laidley, a porter who earns £4.73 an hour for a 40-hour week on shifts said, "£5 is still not enough. It's an insult, degrading money. People have got family, kids and bills to pay". He added, "We won't tolerate this any longer."

The government's moves to dismantle the public health-care system in the United Kingdom began with the contracting out of ancillary services to private firms. National Health Service (NHS) workers were forced to transfer to maintain their jobs, keeping their terms and conditions but at a lower rate of pay. They are entitled to a living allowance, overtime rates, sick pay,

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# G-8 summit backs U.S. campaign against Iran

Washington also pressures Tehran to dismantle Hezbollah

BY NAOMI CRAINE

Washington took new steps to ratchet up its threats and pressure against Iran. At the June 2-3 annual summit in Évian-les-Bains, France, of the "Group of 8," U.S. president George Bush succeeded in getting unanimous agreement for

## U.S. hands off Iran!

—see editorial, page 14

a statement condemning Iran and north Korea for attempting to develop nuclear weapons, and threatening to use a variety of means to stop these governments from doing so. These measures could include intrusive inspections of nuclear power plants and related facilities, economic sanctions, and if necessary down the road, military strikes against the nuclear plants.

Washington is also demanding that Tehran act

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Thousands wave Hezbollah flags in Baalbek, Lebanon, May 25, marking third anniversary of Israeli withdrawal from south Lebanon after 18 years of occupation.

## Tel Aviv makes concessions to Palestinians to block with Washington in targeting Iran

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

Tel Aviv has made concessions to Palestinians in the occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza, and has announced it will make more, leading up to the June 4 meeting in Aqaba, Jordan, between U.S. president George Bush and the Israeli and Palestinian prime ministers.

This summit was organized at Washington's initiative to announce an agreement on a U.S.-crafted "peace" plan. The plan calls for the formation of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip within three years, on the condition that the Palestinian Authority cracks down on groups deemed "terrorist" and chooses a leadership acceptable to the U.S. rulers.

The Israeli government is making these concessions to block with Washington in achieving larger objectives in the region. A major goal shared by the U.S. and Israeli rulers is to deal blows to Iran, including the destruction of Tehran's capacity to develop nuclear weapons.

As part of this goal they seek to neutralize or qualitatively weaken Hezbollah—a Lebanon-based group made up largely of Shiite Muslims—as well as Hamas. A Palestinian group based in Gaza, Hamas, like

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# ‘Not deportable’: Róger Calero wins fight

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right to live and work in the U.S. With the help of the Political Rights Defense Fund, the Róger Calero Defense Committee was launched and a campaign of public protest begun. Hundreds of letters and petitions began to rain down on the immigration service demanding that Calero be released from detention and that charges against him be dropped.

Ten days after Calero’s arrest, the Immigration service announced that they had decided to release him from detention. Calero’s supporters immediately launched a national speaking tour for him to spread the word about his fight, win support, raise funds for legal and publicity expenses, and put pressure on the government to drop the case.

Calero won a wide hearing from supporters of freedom of the press, supporters of the rights of immigrants, defenders of the labor movement, and people concerned about government attacks on democratic rights.

His case was covered by the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press and won support from the National Association of Hispanic Journalists. Organizations from the Coalition for the Human Rights of Immigrants to the Latino Workers Organization lent their support.

Many trade unions joined the fight. Before he became a journalist, Calero had worked in the Midwest as a packinghouse worker in both Iowa and Minnesota. In South St. Paul, Minnesota, he had been part of a groundbreaking union organizing drive that won the union at Dakota Premium.

United Food and Commercial Workers Union Local 789, which now represents workers at the plant, took up the fight from the beginning. Local president Bill Pearson signed on as one of the co-chairs of the defense committee and the local organized a fundraiser at the union hall that brought in over \$2,000.

“His coworkers saw him as a person to turn to for help. So did I,” Pearson wrote to immigration authorities on Calero’s behalf. “Making him leave the country would be an injustice.”

Martha Olvera, co-coordinator of the Coalition for Dignity and Amnesty, Houston, Texas; Pamela Vossenas, national grievance officer of the National Writers Union; and José Oliva, director, Interfaith Workers’ Rights Center, Chicago, Illinois,

serve as the other three chairpeople of the defense committee. Eugene Katz, professor, State University of New York at Stony Brook, New York, is the treasurer.

Many other unions—from District 1199J of the National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees in Newark, New Jersey, Calero’s home town, to the National Union of Journalists in Britain—came to his defense, sending letters to demand the charges be dropped, inviting him to speak, and making financial contributions.

Bruce Nestor, national president of the National Lawyer’s Guild, Lennox Hinds on behalf of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers, and many other supporters of civil liberties lent their assistance.

Calero’s tour and the campaign on his behalf won significant press coverage, especially in the Spanish language press. His story was featured on UNIVISION’s *Aquí y Ahora*, the most widely watched Spanish-language television news program. He was interviewed by *La Opinión* in Los Angeles, *Hoy* in New York, *New York Newsday*, *Free Speech Radio News* on the Pacifica network, and on numerous other programs.

While on tour, Calero lent his support to many other fights, from union struggles like the struggle of garment workers at

Point Blank in Miami to win recognition of their union, to the strike of packinghouse workers at Tyson in Jefferson, Wisconsin, to fights against police brutality. He spoke out on behalf of others facing attack by the immigration police, like Farouk Abdel-Muhti, Sami Al-Arian, and Omar Jamal. He expressed support for five Cuban revolutionaries framed up and imprisoned in U.S. jails.

On May 1, Calero received a fax from his attorney, Claudia Slovinsky. “The good news!” the fax began.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) had filed a one-sentence motion before judge Strasser in Newark to “terminate the instant Removal Proceedings predicated on the Notice to Appear dated December 3, 2002, issued in Houston, Texas.”

The DHS motion was based on two sections of the government’s immigration regulations: “The notice to appear was improvidently issued,” and “Circumstances of the case have changed after the notice was issued to such an extent that continuation is no longer in the best interest of the government.”

But what had “changed” since they grabbed Calero and initiated the deportation proceedings? The only thing that changed was that Róger Calero and supporters of his defense committee around

the country and around the world fought back, loudly and publicly. They made this the wrong fight at the wrong time for the government.

On May 5, Judge Strasser ordered the DHS to give further explanation. He wanted legal justification for their motion, which had only explained the political reasons for getting out of the case.

On May 12 the DHS returned Calero’s regular permanent residence green card, good through 2010, and his Nicaraguan passport.

On May 22 judge Strasser issued the final order terminating the case.

“I want to make the gains of this fight the property of thousands of others who face attack from the government,” Calero said in announcing his intention to tour the country after his victory. “My case shows that if you pick your fight well, and wage your fight well, you can win.

“From the beginning, I have heard from many others who are caught up in the immigration system, fighting to remain here and to defend their rights,” Calero added. “They take heart from my fight and strength from my victory.”

Calero will speak before unions, immigrant rights groups, and rallies of supporters across the country, as well as internationally.

## Hospital workers in London strike

**Continued from front page**  
and pensions.

On the other hand, ISS workers who never worked for the NHS do not have these conditions. At a lunchtime rally, workers held up union placards against these two-tier conditions, demanding “Equal Pay, No Delay.”

The chief manager of the hospital, Peter Coles, promised that the employer would “try to achieve harmonization between the levels of pay for our own staff, and those employed by contractors, by April 2006.” He said “this will constitute a 44 percent pay uplift for the lowest paid staff over three years.”

During the strike, bosses were reported to have hired nonunion workers and paid them £10 an hour to cover the striking workers’ jobs. Strikers said some of

these individuals walked out saying there was too much work to do.

Two years ago in Whipps Cross Hospital there were 61 UNISON members out of 360 workers employed by ISS. After a unionization drive this figure went up to 257—more than 71 percent.

“Being in the union you can see the difference,” said Rose Wollaston. “People are starting to think about pay, the lack of training, and our conditions.” Wollaston, a five-year union member, works part-time as a cleaner.

Len Hockey, joint branch secretary of the UNISON branch, pointed out that the majority of the workers involved in the strike were women who worked long hours, often holding down more than one job. Bisi Adeyinka, for example, has worked at Whipps Cross for 15 years and has been a union member since 1993. She explained that when she asked to go back to Nigeria for a holiday, the bosses told her she would get the sack, since contract workers have no holiday entitlements. When she returned, she joined the union and won her job back.

The strike is also about conditions at work. Nana Ama, who had been a ward



Militant  
**Nursery school workers in Scotland rally for contract. Fellow members of UNISON union struck London’s Whipps Cross Hospital.**

cleaner at Whipps Cross for four months, said, “There’s too much work for one person—you have to clean wards with up to 35 patients. They want cheap labor.”

Pearl Hamilton commented “You have to do so many things and you don’t get nothing for it”.

Ancillary workers at Mile End and St. Clements hospitals in East London are on strike against their employer, Medirest.

Ancillary workers at three hospitals in Scunthorpe, Grimsby, and Goole went on strike for five days the previous week to win £5.03 an hour and equality with NHS staff. In Scotland 5,000 nursery nurses, members of UNISON, took part in a series of strikes two weeks earlier demanding a 35-hour week and a £4,000 a year pay increase.

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# Peru gov't clamps down on wave of strikes and protests

BY RÓGER CALERO

In the face of mounting street protests and labor strikes, Alejandro Toledo, the president of Peru, declared a state of emergency the night of May 27. This is the second time in the less than two years in office that he has used the measure.

The government mobilized thousands of troops and police to enforce the order, which bans strikes and protests. They have fired upon demonstrators, and used tear gas and water hoses to suppress the popular mobilizations. At least 21 people have been wounded and 95 were arrested the first day, according to government officials.

The increasingly unpopular government announced the 30-day state of emergency, after nearly two million people joined in strikes to demand wage increases, jobs, and relief measures for the country's peasants.

Some 280,000 school teachers, who had been on strike for more than two weeks

before Toledo's announcement, vowed to continue their protests despite government threats to declare their strike illegal and fire them.

"The 100-sol (\$29) raise they have offered us is insufficient," said Nilver López, head of the teachers union. "So we teachers have the right to keep expressing our unhappiness in the streets." Teachers, who earn about \$190 a month, are demanding a 210-sol (\$60) raise.

Minister of education Gerardo Ayzanoa ordered the schools open May 28. He gave the strikers six days to return to their classrooms before the government begins hiring unemployed teachers to replace them.

In the face of this government repression, health-care workers and court employees, as well as peasants organizations that had joined the growing protests in the days leading up to the state of emergency, called off their strikes temporarily.

An estimated 1.5 million peasants have



**Protesting teachers in Lima. Strikes and demonstrations by health-care workers, peasants, and others have rocked Peru since early May. President Alejandro Toledo declared state of emergency to crack down on protests against his austerity policies.**

participated in the mobilizations. Some have set up roadblocks along Peru's 1,500-mile Pan American highway to stop farm produce from getting to Lima and other cities. The peasants are demanding lower taxes on the sales of domestic agricultural products and other protections from imports.

In Barranca, north of Lima, local peasants and their supporters—who had kept a roadblock with barricades and tires set ablaze in defiance of the state of emergency—were attacked by government forces May 29 forcing the peasants to defend themselves with rocks.

Workers and peasants in Peru have taken to the streets to protest the effects of the deepening economic depression and the relentless squeeze for profits by local and foreign capitalists. Despite registering a 5.2 percent economic growth last year, the fastest in the region—compared to 0.2 percent in 2001—half of the country's 27 million people live in poverty, and 10 percent are unemployed, according to government figures.

Toledo, who made promises he has not delivered on to create jobs and fight government corruption before his election, now faces widespread popular discontent and plummeting ratings in public opinion polls.

Peru's rulers have run into wide opposition to their plans to privatize the country's resources, and implement austerity measures demanded by the imperialist banks as conditions for loans.

Seeking to reassure foreign capitalists of Peru's reputation as "Latin America's safe haven" for investments, the *Washington Post* downplayed Toledo's decision to impose a state of emergency saying that "such decrees are not uncommon in Latin America," where governments sometimes resort to military responses to protests against "unpopular policies."

## London march backs Irish freedom fight

BY PAUL DAVIES

LONDON—Some 200 people from across the United Kingdom took to the streets here May 24 in a march for a united Ireland. Led by lively republican flute bands from Glasgow and Liverpool, the marchers made their way through Westminster and past Downing Street.

"We're marching through the heart of the British establishment. What can Britain do in Ireland? The short answer is—leave," said Peter Leary. Leary, from Enniskillen, is a member of the British-based network, Student Friends of Ireland.

An Irish student who did not wish to be named said he was marching because "there is still a British military presence in south Armagh where I come from. The army still patrols our streets. They still set up impromptu roadblocks. The police harass prominent people in the nationalist community. The army still flies helicopters over our areas.

"It's all part of the ongoing degradation of the nationalist community. The day you get used to it is the day that you accept it. That is why we will carry on protesting," he said, referring to the brutality of British rule over Northern Ireland and the discrimination against the Catholic population.

Many of the marchers carried placards that read, "Build a united Ireland—Support Sinn Fein," and "Reinstate elections in the North of Ireland now—Defend the right to vote." The latter referred to the British government's recent decision to postpone elections to the Northern Ireland Assembly that are due in May.

"Sinn Fein has been a victim of its own success," explained Dara O'Hagan, the Sinn Fein Assembly member for Upper Bann, to the crowd attending a rally that followed the march. "[British prime minister Anthony] Blair has collapsed the institutions and then blamed this on republicans.

"The real reason is that Sinn Fein is emerging as the largest nationalist party—a reflection of the fact that the demand for Irish unity and independence is gaining ground. Blair is acting like a 19th century colonial overlord in both Ireland and Iraq."

The rally was also addressed by John McDonnell, a Labour member of Parliament (MP) in Westminster, who demanded the government immediately reinstate the elections to the Assembly.

Other speakers described the ongoing harassment of Irish people living in Britain. Pat Reynolds reported on the fight being waged by the Justice for Christy McGrath campaign. McGrath is a 24-year-old from Tipperary, Ireland, who is imprisoned in Britain on frame-up charges of murdering a man in County Durham, northern England. Throughout

the investigation into the murder, the cops referred to McGrath as "the Irish lad." Isolated in custody, McGrath was advised by his lawyer to plead guilty to avoid a harsher sentence.

McGrath has the support of Billy Power. Power is one of the Birmingham Six, who were framed by the British government for bombings in Birmingham in the 1970s and eventually freed. He is also backed by dozens of MPs from the British parliament and TDs. TD stands for Teachta Dála, or deputy of the Dáil—a member of the Irish parliament.

Speaking for the Irish Human Rights and Justice Campaign, Terry Stewart described the number of "suicides" of Irish people in jail in Britain. In Brixton prison, all but one of the seven prisoners whose deaths were reported as "suicides" between 1999 and 2002 were Irish. Stewart had joined the march with other campaigners with a banner that demanded "No More Deaths in Custody."

Also on the march were a group of

Basque youth resident in London, who carried Basque flags and drew attention to the ongoing struggle of the Basque people against their national oppression by the Spanish state.

Among the speakers were also Diane Langford from the Palestinian Solidarity Campaign and Ghada El Najar of the Palestinian Progressive Youth Union in the Gaza Strip. "Irish and Palestinian people all over the world are struggling against imperialism," El Najar told demonstrators. "Our struggles are not religious ones. They are conflicts over human rights and against discrimination," she said.

Peter Middleton of the Wolfe Tone Society in London, which had organized the rally and march, urged participants to take part in a May 29 picket at Downing Street and in the James Connolly memorial demonstration on June 7 in Edinburgh. Connolly was a leader of the 1916 Easter Rebellion by Irish pro-independence forces against British colonial rule in Ireland.

## U.S. plans for executions at Guantánamo

BY RÓGER CALERO

The U.S. officer in charge of Washington's prison camp in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, Major-General Geoffrey Miller, revealed that Washington is making plans to try, convict, and execute prisoners at the U.S. concentration camp on Cuban soil.

According to an article in the May 25 British newspaper *The Mail on Sunday*, Miller said U.S. authorities would conduct the trials and executions of prisoners held there without leaving the camp's boundaries. Another option being considered, Miller told *The Mail*, was building a permanent jail, with an execution chamber.

"It is not surprising the authorities are building a death row because they have said they plan to try capital cases before these tribunals," U.S. law professor Jonathan Turley told the press. "This camp was created to execute people. The [Bush] administration has no interest in long-term prison sentences for people it regards as hard-core terrorists."

Miller's announcement comes as the Pentagon prepares to begin trying prisoners at Guantánamo before military tribunals. U.S. president George Bush is supposed to individually select who among them will stand trial.

Since they were authorized by President Bush in November 2001, the defense department has been preparing a series of guidelines to be used by these kangaroo courts, giving the Pentagon complete control of the proceedings—including naming of the military commissions to hear the cases, approving charges, reviewing the

findings, and imposing sentences.

The U.S. government holds 680 inmates from 43 countries at Guantánamo—territory it occupies against the will of the Cuban people—indefinitely, in subhuman conditions, with no charges, after having labeled them "enemy combatants." Many have been subjected to what can only be described as systematic torture. The prisoners include at least three boys between the ages of 13 and 15, whom U.S. authorities have cynically labeled "juvenile enemy combatants."

Most of the inmates were brought to this concentration camp immediately following the U.S. war on Afghanistan. Many were shackled and blindfolded for the 24-hour flight and were originally held in outdoor wire-fence cages. The U.S. government has since built the more permanent Camp Delta facility. Each cell has a through-floor toilet, a sink, and a metal bed. Denial of exercise and reading material is used as a "disciplinary tool," according to Command Sgt. Maj. John Vannatta, the superintendent of the prison. There have been 25 suicide attempts by 17 individuals since the prison opened. More than 5 percent of the detainees are being treated with antidepressants.

Washington has attempted to justify these brutal conditions and its refusal to abide by international rules on prisoners of war by claiming the prisoners are "unlawful combatants," and therefore excluded from protections for such inmates spelled out in the Geneva Convention. By holding the prisoners on Cuban soil, the U.S. government also claims to be bound by fewer restrictions than it would face inside the

United States.

The U.S. rulers have sought to set a precedent, claiming the military trials they are planning for the Guantánamo prisoners were never intended to offer protections identical to those under U.S. courts; nor are they like courts-martial, where the defendant is offered basic protections, and the findings are subject to independent judicial review.

Under the guidelines set by the Pentagon, if the military tribunal's rulings are challenged, a three-member panel selected by the secretary of defense will review the rulings before a final decision is made by President Bush or defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld.

Donald Rehkopf, co-chair of the military committee of the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers criticized the rules "as crafted to guarantee convictions, compel guilty pleas, and make it as easy as possible to get the death penalty."

In the meantime, the Supreme Court declined May 27 to hear an appeal made by New Jersey newspapers, challenging the government's powers to hold secret deportation hearings in the cases of hundreds of immigrant workers detained after Sept. 11, 2001.

The Bush administration has defended the policy of holding secret hearings in cases it deems of "special interest" because of possible connections to "terrorism."

According to Washington, about 505 of the 760 detainees designated as "special interest" by the government have been deported.



# U.S., UK oil giants line up at the trough in occupied Iraq

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

U.S. and British oil companies are muzzling around the trough of Iraq's oil wealth, following the May 22 UN Security Council vote lifting the sanctions imposed on the country in 1990. Working with Iraqi oil officials, U.S. "experts" have begun to kick start production from the country's vast oil fields.

The increasing flow of oil and the keen interest of the oil barons are signs, among others, that U.S.-British forces have made progress in stabilizing their occupation of the country of 25 million people. Speaking of the major oil firms, Muhammad al-Jiburi, director general of the Iraqi oil company's export division, said May 30, "You just name it and they have been in touch with us." Among the reported suitors were the world's three biggest oil companies: ExxonMobil and ChevronTexaco of the United States—the two largest—and British Petroleum of the United Kingdom.

The two U.S. giants were among the biggest U.S. buyers of Iraqi oil under the UN oil-for-food program—the form the sanctions took from the mid-1990s on. The termination of the program ends the role of UN-approved middlemen, enabling the oil giants to deal directly with an Iraqi oil ministry functioning under Washington and London's auspices.

Bidding for contracts opened May 30. There are already plenty of indications that contracts French and Russian companies signed with the former Saddam Hussein government for oil and gas exploration, amounting to some \$20 billion, will not be honored. Paris and Moscow were among the principal beneficiaries of the oil-for-food program, and had signed these contracts to go into effect once the UN sanctions were lifted. According to *ABC News on Line*, Richard Perle, a former Pentagon adviser, said Russia had "placed its bets on a loser." Barhim Sali, prime minister in the Kurdish-controlled areas of northern Iraq, stated during a recent visit to Washington that these contracts "will not be honored."

The May 27 *Le Monde*, a Paris daily, published an article titled "Iraq moves rapidly to restore oil production." It stated, "The Americans are in full control of [oil] exploitation; they have named a new Iraqi 'ministry' and are ensconced in its management.... Today production approaches 700,000 barrels, a figure which should double over the coming month."

Iraq's oil fields were a principal target

of the imperialist troops both in the invasion and before, when U.S. Special Forces collaborated with the Kurdish parties to secure the fields in the north. Today, the total U.S. and British forces in Iraq stand at around 160,000.

### Imperialist forces under attack

Lt. Gen. David McKiernan, head of U.S. and British ground forces in Iraq, indicated at a May 29 press conference that he would cancel the scheduled return home of soldiers of the U.S. Third Infantry Division. Some would be sent to towns northwest of Baghdad where U.S. soldiers had faced a string of attacks in the previous few days, he said. The division was part of the original drive from Kuwait to Baghdad beginning in late March. It has been used since then in policing the capital.

Iraqi fighters killed several GIs the last week of May in firefights and ambushes. The U.S. occupying forces have suffered some 40 casualties in the six weeks since the collapse of the Iraqi armed forces, compared with 120 during the previous month of combat.

U.S. troops have shot down an unreported number of Iraqis in the most recent engagements. The most serious clash took place in Fallujah, when two U.S. soldiers were killed in an attack with rocket-propelled grenades on their checkpoint. Three weeks earlier U.S. soldiers stationed in a Fallujah schoolhouse had fired on a crowd protesting the occupation, killing more than a dozen people. A similar attack on a U.S. military convoy took place in Baghdad June 1. One GI was wounded and one Iraqi civilian killed in the firefight.

The Iraqi actions are not "criminal activities, these are combat activities," said McKiernan. "We're going to address those activities by applying every resource available to us."

The May 30 *Wall Street Journal* reported that the U.S. command had decided to "pull out troops from the city of Hit after violent anti-American protests" earlier that week. Hit is around 100 miles west of Baghdad.

Sporadic military resistance notwithstanding, street demonstrations against the occupation have been smaller and less frequent than in the first weeks following the war, including in the south. The last major protest in Baghdad, organized by Shiite opponents of the occupation, took to the streets May 19. Shiite clerics mounted a far smaller protest May 29.

One source of frustration and resentment, particularly among the layer of Iraqi politicians who see themselves playing starring roles in a future pro-imperial-



U.S. soldiers handcuff man in Baghdad as occupation forces seek to crack down on Iraqis owning automatic and heavy weapons. The U.S. command has deployed forces to northwest of the city following a number of clashes with Iraqis.

ist administration, has been Washington and London's cancellation of announced plans to rapidly establish an interim Iraqi government.

On June 1 the head of the U.S. administration in Iraq, Paul Bremer, announced that he would appoint a "political council" of up to 30 Iraqi citizens, each of whom would be given an advisory post in a government ministry. Bremer briefed a group of Iraqi politicians about the proposal, including representatives of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan and the Kurdish Democratic Party, the Iraqi National Congress, Iraqi National Accord, and Shiite-based Dawa Party and Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq.

Afterwards, one Iraqi participant commented, "I think they are looking for some role for the political parties to have some Iraqi faces."

### 'Weapons of mass destruction'

A small number of the occupying forces—some 1,000 U.S., British, and Australian operatives—have been assigned to the search for Saddam Hussein's alleged stockpiles of "weapons of mass destruction." After checking out some 200 "suspect" sites, the "searchers" have come up empty-handed. Their failure has received considerable coverage in the big-business media in Europe, where the French and German governments took their distance from the U.S.-led drive to war—a course they rightly saw as threatening their own imperialist interests.

U.S. officials have downplayed the issue, emphasizing that it was never their sole stated reason for war. On May 30 the Pentagon made this crystal clear by releasing the full transcript of Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz's remarks to *Vanity Fair* magazine.

In the interview Wolfowitz explained

why the issue got such coverage, saying, "the truth is that for reasons that have a lot to do with the U.S. government bureaucracy we settled on the one issue that everyone could agree on [in the propaganda offensive], which was weapons of mass destruction, as the core reason."

Wolfowitz continued, "There have always been three fundamental concerns. One is weapons of mass destruction, the second is support for terrorism, the third is [Saddam Hussein's] criminal treatment of the Iraqi people."

Meanwhile, revelations of the occupying forces' "criminal treatment of the Iraqi people" during the one-month invasion have begun to come to light.

A week after British officers criticized their U.S. allies for failing to gain the confidence of the people in Baghdad—allegedly in contrast to their own record in Basra—photos have been published showing the use of torture against Iraqi prisoners by British troops.

Kelly Tilford, 22, who is the proprietor of a photo shop in Tamworth, Staffordshire, discovered several incriminating shots on a roll of film delivered by a soldier in the 1st Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, which served in southern Iraq. The soldier is being questioned by military police.

In one shot, an Iraqi prisoner trussed in rope was dangling from the raised forks of a forklift truck. "I saw the look on his face," said Tilford. "He was petrified." Three other photos showed Iraqi prisoners engaged in coerced sexual acts.

The revelations followed news that Col. Timothy Collins, commander of the 1st Battalion of the Royal Irish Regiment, faces allegations of abuse of Iraqi civilians. A U.S. soldier accused Collins of pistol-whipping one man, firing at the feet of others, and shooting at the tires of passing vehicles to no military purpose.

## — CALENDAR — AUSTRALIA

### A Sahrawi woman speaks out on independence struggle

Fatima Mahfoud, a representative of Polisario, is visiting Australia to speak about the struggle for independence of Western Sahara and women's role in it.

### Sydney

#### Tuesday June 10

12:30 p.m., Sydney Uni Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, Mackie Bldg, Arundel St., Glebe.  
6:00 p.m. Sydney Trades Hall, cnr. Goulbourn and Dixon Sts.

#### Wednesday June 11

4:00 p.m. Centre for Refugee Research, Room 1531, Mathews Bldg, UNSW, Kensington.

#### Sunday June 22

4:00 p.m., Pathfinder Bookshop, 281-7 Beamish St. Campsie. (02)9718-9698

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## ‘Fight was worth it’: pulp and paper workers in New Zealand vote to end 88-day strike

BY TERRY COGGAN

AUCKLAND, New Zealand—Workers at Carter Holt Harvey's Kinleith pulp and paper mill in Tokoroa voted May 28 to accept a new contract and end their 88-day strike, the longest in the giant plant's history. The 270 workers told the company they would be ready to start work on June 3, rejecting its bid to resume production immediately.

Kinleith workers, members of the Engineering, Printing and Manufacturing Union (EPMU), described in phone interviews a "jubilant" mood at a celebration in Tokoroa the following evening.

They also offered a balanced assessment of the settlement as a whole. "It was about smashing the union, attacking our wages and conditions," said unionist Pete Mathis. "They haven't done it this time really, but I'm pretty confident it will be an ongoing thing."

A central issue in the strike was the company's demand to be able to assign or promote workers to jobs at its discretion,

rather than through a union-enforced seniority system. The new contract gives the company a final say over senior appointments, but only if two panels with joint company-union representation have been unable to reach agreement. The company has also agreed to retain a specialist fire-fighting and chemical spills unit, dropping plans to require production workers to cover these emergencies on top of their own jobs, a move the union said would have seriously compromised safety standards.

Workers expressed reservations about the new shift pattern, which will see them working 12-hour days on a four-day-on, four-day-off roster. Instead of being paid an hourly rate with overtime pay after eight hours, they will be paid an annual "salary." Under this setup they can be asked to work up to 15 extra 12-hour shifts a year with no extra pay, although in the final negotiations the company agreed no worker can be called in on more than one of his or her four days off, and then no more than once a month.

Dave Jennings, a production worker at

the plant for 25 years, said that in his opinion accepting a basic compulsory 12-hour day was "a step backward for the union. We won the eight-hour day 100 years ago."

The Kinleith workers received wide support during their fight. Fellow timber workers, EPMU members at other sites, and unionists such as wharf and rail workers, made financial contributions. Representatives of the strike visited workplaces around the country and in Australia to explain the issues. The strikers maintained a round-the-clock protest camp on the main highway at the mill entrance, where they welcomed a steady stream of well-wishers, including local residents and passing truck drivers and motorists who often brought donations of food or money.

"It's been worth it, definitely," said Mathis. "The first contract they offered us at the start of the dispute was draconian. We've come 150 percent from there, and we know that. No matter where I go in the community, I get a pat on the back and thanks for staying in there."



# ‘Militant’ campaigners reach sub goals

BY PATRICK O’NEILL

Campaigners for the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* have reached the subscription goals for both socialist publications.

Mounting a big push in the final stretch of the international circulation campaign, they sold some 280 subscriptions to the *Militant* in seven days. By the June 3 deadline they had clocked up a total of 1,001 subs in the eight-week drive—just over the goal of 1,000.

Local goals were reached in almost all 36 cities where the campaign was organized in Australia, Canada, Iceland, New Zealand, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

Campaigners also surpassed the goal of 375 subscriptions to *Perspectiva Mundial*, winning 406 new or repeat subscribers to the Spanish-language monthly.

They also sold 384 copies of *New International* magazine and *Capitalism’s World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium* by Jack Barnes, falling short of the goal of 600.

As they approached the finish line, participants in the drive got onto a more consistent campaign footing, working for every last possible subscription and book. Socialist workers in the meatpacking, coal mining, and garment and textile unions played a leading part in this effort. To co-workers and fellow unionists they explained that the *Mili-*

*tant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, and Pathfinder books are essential weapons for working people confronting both the drive to war abroad by Washington and other imperialist powers, and the bosses’ relentless push to impose speedup and cut labor costs.

Through initiatives such as on the-job sales, plant-gate literature tables, and special teams to coalfields and meat-packing plants, members of all three trade union fractions of the Socialist Workers Party made their goals for the socialist periodicals.

The success of subscription-getters at coal mines in Alabama, Colorado, and Pennsylvania registered the high regard in which the *Militant* is held by many miners, especially those who are veterans of union battles and organizing drives. The sales of *Perspectiva Mundial* showed the changing face of the coal industry and the increasing role played in it by workers from Latin America.



Militant/Sam Manuel

Top, participants in May meeting in New York City in solidarity with revolutionary Cuba look over *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, and Pathfinder books. Socialist press has answered U.S. government’s propaganda campaign against the Cuban Revolution. Bottom, socialist literature table at April 1 demonstration in Washington, D.C., organized in defense of affirmative action.

Militant/Perspectiva Mundial Spring Subscription Drive April 5–June 1: final scoreboard							
Country	Militant			PM		Book	
	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold
AUSTRALIA	30	37	123%	5	4	12	7
UNITED STATES							
Omaha	17	24	141%	31	41	17	18
Des Moines	25	33	132%	12	21	12	13
Washington	25	32	128%	12	14	15	11
Los Angeles	45	52	116%	20	23	20	21
Charlotte	20	23	115%	8	12	16	5
Boston	35	39	111%	15	23	25	30
Birmingham	20	22	110%	5	6	10	6
Tucson	10	11	110%	2	2	6	6
Utah	10	11	110%	5	9	10	4
Atlanta	35	37	106%	15	17	25	11
Western Colorado	18	19	106%	12	12	10	3
Chicago	40	42	105%	25	27	25	16
Twin Cities	45	47	104%	35	39	25	14
Detroit	25	26	104%	8	8	12	12
Houston	25	27	104%	10	8	25	15
Seattle	30	31	103%	8	6	20	4
Miami	32	33	103%	10	8	25	10
San Francisco	35	36	103%	15	17	25	10
Newark	55	56	102%	20	16	30	20
NE Pennsylvania	20	20	100%	6	6	10	11
Philadelphia	30	30	100%	7	6	10	5
Pittsburgh	30	30	100%	3	2	20	15
Tampa	25	22	88%	10	10	15	4
New York	100	72	72%	40	32	60	22
Cleveland	20	12	60%	8	4	18	3
U.S. total	772	787	102%	342	369	486	287
ICELAND	15	15	100%	1	0	8	8
NEW ZEALAND							
Auckland	20	21	105%	1	0	5	3
Christchurch	16	13	81%	1	1	4	0
N.Z. total	36	34	94%	2	1	9	3
CANADA							
Montreal	12	13	108%	6	10	15	14
Vancouver	35	36	103%	5	6	15	15
Toronto	30	19	63%	5	3	25	6
CANADA total	77	68	88%	16	19	55	35
SWEDEN							
Gothenburg	12	12	100%	2	5	8	6
Stockholm	10	7	70%	2	0	4	2
SWEDEN Total	22	19	86%	4	5	12	8
UNITED KINGDOM							
London	40	34	85%	15	4	25	32
Cent. Scotland	12	7	58%	1	0	8	4
UK total	52	41	79%	16	4	33	36
Int'l totals	1024	1001	100%	386	406	615	384
Goal/Should be	1000	1000	100%	375	375	600	600
IN THE UNIONS							
	Militant			PM		Book	
	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold
UNITED STATES							
UFCW	50	51	102%	75	95	40	27
UMWA	15	17	113%	6	9	11	3
UNITE	25	27	108%	20	25	20	11
Total	90	95	106%	101	129	71	41
ICELAND							
Efling	1	1	100%			1	0
SWEDEN							
LIVS	3	3	100%			3	1
AUSTRALIA							
AMIEU	4	5	125%			2	1
MUA	4	2	25%			2	0
Total	8	7	88%			4	1
CANADA							
UFCW	9	7	78%	2	0	9	2
UNITE	4	0	0%	5	3	6	3
Total	13	7	54%	7	3	15	5
NEW ZEALAND							
MWU	2	0	0%			1	0
NDU	2	1	50%			1	0
Total	4	1	25%			2	0

AMEIU—Australasian Meat Industry Employees’ Union; Efling—Union of unskilled workers; LIVS—Food Workers Union; MUA—Maritime Union of Australia; MWU—Meat Workers Union; NDU—National Distribution Union; UFCW—United Food and Commercial Workers; UMWA—United Mine Workers of America; UNITE—Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees.

## Subscription sales to miners

“Across the country, we sold many subscriptions to co-workers in the mines,” wrote Jason Alessio, a coal miner who is a member of United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) Local 1984 in Colorado. Socialist miners made an all-out push in the last week.

“Two teams headed out to coal-mining areas in the Navajo Nation. They sold more than 25 papers at one mine portal, along with one subscription,” he said.

“They also visited miners who have subscribed in the past,” Alessio wrote. “One miner immediately asked about Róger Calero and his fight to stay in the United States. ‘What happened to that guy who was fighting against his deportation?’ he asked. ‘I was following his story every week and then the paper stopped coming’ [see story front page].

“This union veteran showed the team a beautiful scrapbook of the UMWA local’s last three strikes, dating back to 1987,” reported Alessio. “Included were photos, articles, chant sheets, and more. Every article from the *Militant* covering their struggles was there.”

A team to the Navajo Nation visited Kayenta, Arizona, home to two strip mines owned by Peabody Coal Corp. and organized by the UMWA. Elizabeth Kirwin reported sales of 17 copies of the *Militant* and three subscriptions.

Among those who have found the *Militant* useful are a number of young people in cities around the country who are preparing to visit revolutionary Cuba at the end of July as part of the Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange, which is being hosted by the main Cuban youth organizations (see article on page 8).

## Supporters of communist movement make progress in \$300,000 campaign

BY NAN BAILEY

LOS ANGELES—Supporters of the Socialist Workers Party contributed more than \$27,800 in April, well above the \$25,000-a-month average that is the goal in the their monthly contribution campaign. Last August, supporters decided to campaign to meet the goal of raising \$300,000 annually in contributions to the party. The nine-month total collection stands at \$225,600.

In a letter to supporters announcing the April results, Sara Gates said, “This is fantastic news. As with any victory, we must use it to press forward and continue to work to professionalize supporters’ finances. We are in striking distance of our goal of an annual \$300,000 in contributions by the end of July. A solid collection of \$25,000 in May, as well as in June and July, will bring this campaign home.” Gates is the organizer of the Seattle-based steering committee that coordinates the campaign.

In her letter Gates added, “Since August of 1999, when contributions from supporters first began to be organized centrally through a steering committee in Seattle working with supporters around the country, we have steadily made improvements in our organization of the campaign, in the number of contributors, and in the amount pledged and paid each month. We have met every goal that we have set for ourselves, and we are within reach of meeting the present one. Based on what this campaign

has accomplished we have earned the opportunity to take the next logical step.

“Beginning with the June collection, all checks collected by supporters’ financial directors will be sent to Seattle. We are in the process of obtaining a post office box in Seattle and will announce the address as soon as it is finalized. In the meantime, checks for contributions for the month of May should be sent to the party national office in New York.

“This new responsibility is one of a number of examples of the strength of the organization of supporters of the party today,” Gates said. “The accomplishments of this campaign go hand in hand with the progress being made by supporters on the Pathfinder Print Project and at the Pathfinder distribution center in Atlanta.

“We are all taking on added responsibilities in our work to support the party. In doing so, we are writing a new page in the history of the organization of the communist party. Our support will continue to reinforce and magnify the party’s ability to carry out the tasks that lie ahead. We help bring the party’s message of anti-imperialism and proletarian internationalism to increasing numbers of workers and youth who are looking for ways to fight back against the capitalist system that oppresses, degrades, and dehumanizes them. Our party offers the political way forward, and supporters are there every step of the way.”

If you would like to join the monthly supporters contribution campaign, contact Sara Gates at sjgates@attbi.com.



# Deflation threat looms over Europe, U.S.

BY MICHAEL ITALIE

The May 15 announcement that the economies of the Netherlands, Germany, and Italy each contracted in the first quarter of this year sparked warnings that a deflationary crisis may spread across capitalist Europe. At the same time Washington gave the nod to a continued decline in the value of the dollar against the euro, providing U.S. capitalists with a growing advantage in their struggle for markets with rival manufacturers in Europe.

Deflationary pressures are becoming more apparent in the United States too. "U.S. wholesale prices plunged in April at the fastest pace in more than 50 years while more than a quarter of America's industrial base sat idle," the May 16 *Financial Times* reported. The U.S. Labor Department said its producer price index fell by 1.9 percent—the sharpest drop since at least 1947.

Deflation, a general decline in prices that accompanies a crisis of "overproduction" and steep rise of unemployment, is a product of the long-term tendency of capitalist profit rates to fall, heightening price competition among rival capitals and putting enormous pressures on capacity-increasing investment and expanded production.

Due to an accelerating crisis of declining profit rates for nearly three decades, capitalists in the United States and other imperialist countries have been driven to cut costs. They have been "downsizing" or "reengineering"—terms often used in business jargon to describe cost cutting—rather than expanding productive capacity, because they can't secure a competitive return on investments in capacity-increasing plant and equipment. This is the opposite of what most employers did from the 1950s into the 1970s.

Throughout the world capitalist system, price competition is intensifying among capitalists, as they struggle over limited markets. As a result, there is a tendency towards deflation, with the prices of many products falling. The capitalists fear a deflationary collapse like the one that marked the opening years of the Great Depression of the 1930s.

While no leading capitalist figures are predicting such a deflationary spiral now, many of their representatives are calling for pragmatic measures to head off the deflationary crisis that Japan has faced for a decade.

## Germany's slump drags down Europe

The performance of Germany's economy prompted the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) "deflation task force" to forecast in a May 18 report a high risk of deflation in Germany in the months ahead. German economic output shrank by 0.2 percent in the first three months of 2003—the Italian by 0.1 percent, and the Dutch by 0.3 percent—making for two consecutive quarterly contractions. For Germany this dismal performance followed a growth of its gross domestic product by only 0.2 percent in 2002. The IMF concluded that "the probability of mild deflation taking hold" in Germany in the year ahead is "considerable."

The same IMF report also pointed to an increased likelihood of deflation in Taiwan and Hong Kong, and of worsening deflation in Japan. "In the U.S.," stated the report, "risk of deflation appears relatively low... but not minimal."

With an economy 50 percent larger

than those of France and Britain, the impact of developments in Germany is felt throughout Europe. The statistics office of the European Union reported that factory output in the 12 "eurozone" countries dropped by 1.2 percent in March, sparking a debate over the extent of the crisis and how to head it off.

Government officials in Germany tried to strike an optimistic note. "It is by definition not correct that Germany has entered [a] recession," said the country's finance minister Hans Eichel. Ernest Welteke, president of Germany's central bank, added that he doesn't "see any deflationary dangers."

On the other hand, the big-business press in the United Kingdom began sounding the alarm that Germany's slump could drag the rest of the eurozone into recession. Upbeat economic predictions by Berlin and European Central Bank (ECB) officials show that these people "are living in a parallel universe, one inhabited by permanently deluded optimists," said London's *Financial Times* in a May 16 editorial.

"It is precisely the ECB's refusal to acknowledge publicly the dangers of deflation," said the *Times* of London in its May 27 issue, "that leaves the eurozone—in particular Germany—at risk. The overarching lesson from Japan, whose economy has been struggling with falling prices and wages for years, is that deflation becomes more likely if policymakers are slow to realize that it is a danger."

Some in the big-business media now argue that the remedy is to push up inflation—urging governments and banks to crank out money in various paper forms, eventually far outstripping the output of commodities that could be purchased with that money. This is a concrete indication that deflation and inflation are not mutually exclusive phenomena. Under depression conditions, workers can face a disastrous collapse of productive employment, which can soon be accompanied by a terrible price explosion.

The May 16 *Financial Times*, for example, suggested that a "money rain" may be needed to stave off continued price reductions and deflation. Pumping more money into the economy would provide "good reason to hope" that the European Central Bank would be successful in its new strategy of preventing inflation from dropping below 2 percent a year, the paper said.

In the middle of this, British government officials announced once again that "the time is not ripe" for the United Kingdom to adopt the euro as its currency.

As a result of these pressures, competition between the main imperialist powers—Washington, Paris, Berlin, in particular—is intensifying.

In May U.S. treasury secretary John



Workers in Germany protest rising unemployment, 1997. Banner reads: "Out of work tomorrow?" Deflationary trend has accompanied high jobless levels in capitalist Europe, where the unemployment rate has hit 9 percent in Germany, Italy, and France.

Snow signaled a continued shift away from the Clinton administration's "strong dollar" policy, stating that the nearly 40 percent drop in value of the dollar against the euro since 2000 was "a fairly modest realignment of currencies."

## Drop of dollar against the euro

The May 18 *Financial Times*, however, stated that the devaluation of the dollar "will have more serious consequences for the transatlantic relationship than all the earnest diplomatic maneuvers, speeches and articles on the subject." The dramatically reduced cost of U.S. exports compared to European commodities has battered German industry. Volkswagen, Europe's largest car maker, reported the euro's surge pulled its profits down by \$460 million, or 67 percent, in the first quarter of this year alone.

U.S. manufactures can also use the increased cost of European imports to keep prices high in the domestic market. This is an edge the Big Three U.S. auto companies need as nearly 4 million unsold cars and trucks are backed up at assembly plants, on auto dealers' lots, and at various overflow sites in and around Detroit.

The overproduction of cars and other commodities than can be sold at a high enough profit—what *USA Today* referred to as the "Death by 1,000 price cuts"—is driving the deflationary pressure in Europe, Japan, and the United States. The June 2 *Business Week* pointed to "the worldwide dearth of demand" that leave manufacturers "awash in capacity." Federal Reserve

Board figures released May 15 indicated that just under 75 percent of U.S. industrial capacity was being used in April, the lowest rate since 1983.

Growing competition for markets between capitalists in Europe and the United States is increasing the likelihood of trade wars. Washington, Paris, or Berlin may adopt new protectionist measures to protect their interests. The European Union is threatening to impose \$4 billion in tariffs on U.S. goods if Congress doesn't repeal tax breaks for U.S. exporters. At the same time, the Bush administration is challenging the EU's ban on imports of genetically modified U.S. corn, soybeans, and other crops. Philip Condit, president of the aerospace giant Boeing, lamented that World Trade Organization talks that could open up markets for U.S. business "are losing momentum."

The May 29 *Wall Street Journal* ridiculed concerns that an across-the-board drop in prices is in the offing in the United States. The same issue of the big-business daily, however, noted in a front-page headline that "For Many This Recovery Feels More Like a Recession." In spite of a modest expansion of the economy, the *Journal* said, employers are still shedding jobs at a "furious pace"—9.2 million are unemployed in the United States today, and another 4.8 million are working part-time jobs because they can't find full-time work. Employer speedup on the job has driven up worker productivity to the point that bosses can meet increases in demand while eliminating jobs.

# Texas: new restriction on right to abortion

BY JACQUIE HENDERSON

HOUSTON—On May 23 the Texas Senate and House of Representatives completed approval of a bill that represents the most serious attack to date on a women's right to choose abortion in this state.

Misnamed the "Women's Right to Know Act," it requires that women, before being able to obtain an abortion, wait 24 hours after being provided information about "medical risks of abortion." They will

also be required to view photographs and descriptions of fetal development stages, a listing of adoption agencies, fathers' responsibilities, and services for women who reject abortion.

The bill originated in the House and passed the Senate May 20 in a bipartisan vote of 21-10. The Senate made one small wording change, requiring the House to vote again May 23. All the bill now requires is Governor Rick Perry's signature to make it law. Perry supports the bill and is expected to sign it into law.

Nineteen other states have decreed waiting-period restrictions on women seeking to exercise their right to choose an abortion.

Over the years the areas of Texas where abortion services are available have been reduced to 15 of the 254 counties. The new law will make it especially difficult for women workers and farmers to get abortions. Already traveling long distances to an abortion provider, women may now have to take an extra day off work and make other arrangements such as child care for the day or two that will now be involved in having an abortion. In 1999, the state passed legislation requiring teenage girls to notify their parents before terminating a pregnancy.

Kae McLaughlin, executive director of the Texas Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League, told the press,

"This is not a bill that is brought to us by people who are concerned about women's health. This is a bill that is brought to us by people who would ban abortion entirely if it were possible here in Texas." She said the waiting period will hurt women in the state who have to travel far from home to abortion facilities.

The "medical information" doctors would be required to give includes the assertion of a supposed link between abortions and breast cancer that has been disputed by both the American Cancer Society and the American Medical Association.

The law also requires women receiving abortions after 15 weeks of pregnancy to have the procedure done at a qualified hospital or other ambulatory surgical center, but not at regular abortion clinics. There are only a handful of facilities in Texas that meet the requirements to qualify under the law.

Passage of the bill was delayed temporarily by a debate over pregnancy from incest and rape. A clause was included that enables doctors to give information about emergency contraception to such women, while still requiring them to submit to the 24 hour procedures if they choose abortion. A doctor who fails to offer the material could be fined \$10,000.

Legislation has already passed the state senate giving legal status to the fetus.

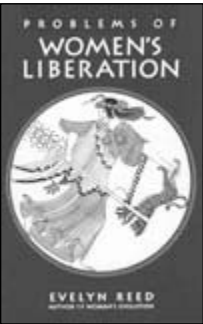
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# Tel Aviv makes concessions to Palestinians

**Continued from front page**

Hezbollah, aims to establish what it calls an Islamic republic. Both Hamas and Hezbollah have opposed any political settlement with Tel Aviv, have taken responsibility for guerrilla attacks and suicide bombings against Zionist targets inside Israel and elsewhere, and are on Washington's hit list of "terrorist" organizations.

Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon has made some commitments to the U.S.-sponsored plan for an Israeli-Palestinian accord, known as the "road map." But these commitments leave open the possibility that the Zionist regime will later pull back from recognizing any kind of Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza, once these broader goals of Tel Aviv and Washington are met.

## Initial Israeli concessions

On May 25 the Israeli cabinet approved the so-called road map in a split vote. "The moment has arrived to divide this tract of land between us and the Palestinians," Sharon told the Israeli newspaper *Yediot Ahronot*. The government held a second vote, rejecting the right of the 700,000 Palestinians expelled from their homes in the 1948 Arab-Israeli war, and their estimated 4 million descendants, to return to their land in what is today Israel—a key Palestinian demand. Sharon also stated that his government has 14 objections to the "road map," which must be taken into account during its implementation.

The next day, the Israeli prime minister took this stance further at a Likud party meeting. "You may not like the word, but what's happening is occupation," Sharon told Likud members of parliament, referring to the West Bank and Gaza. "Holding 3.5 million Palestinians under occupation is a bad thing for Israel, for the Palestinians, and for the Israeli economy." Another 1.2 million Arabs who are Israeli citizens live inside Israel today, along with 5.5 million Jews.

Sharon, a former general in the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF), has overseen massacres of Palestinians, including the infamous slaughter of more than 3,000 civilians at the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps in Beirut in 1982, while he was defense minister.

After coming under fire from many in his governing coalition and beyond for his May 26 statements, Sharon backtracked, saying he meant the Palestinians were occupied, not the land.

On June 1, Tel Aviv announced it had lifted its closure of the occupied territories, which it had imposed since May 18. This was one of many such closures over the course of the last several years. The Israeli regime said that as many as 25,000 Palestinians with work permits could now travel to Israel.

The first day after this step, about 4,500 Palestinians from Gaza were allowed to cross into Israel on foot, according to Agence France-Presse. Three years ago, before the eruption of the latest armed conflict between the occupying forces and the Palestinian resistance, some 30,000 workers and small businessmen used to cross legally from Gaza into Israel for jobs. More than 120,000 Palestinians across the occupied territories held such permits at that time.

The situation in the West Bank, however, has not changed. According to the June 2 *Haaretz*, one of the main Israeli dailies, "Despite lifting the closure, the IDF has not stopped surrounding the West Bank and has not removed the dirt roadblocks at the entrances to cities and villages. Most Palestinians are unable to get from the villages to the cities or to travel on the roads that link West Bank cities, and in some places IDF roadblocks are also limiting residents' movements within the cities."

If the Israeli army begins redeploying and allows Palestinians to move freely in the West Bank, the IDF has made it clear it will divert Palestinian traffic to roads designated only for Palestinians, which are not in good condition and are the longest routes.

"Israeli claims about a so-called easing of the closure are untrue," said Nabil Abu Rdainah, an aide to Palestinian Authority president Yasir Arafat. "The siege should be lifted."

Israeli army attacks have continued, though to a lesser degree. Israeli troops shot at two Palestinian students near Jenin



**Palestinian workers line up at Erez checkpoint June 2, crossing into Gaza on their way back from working in Israel, after Tel Aviv lifted closure of occupied territories.**

in the northern West Bank, for example, killing one May 29. A second Palestinian died in Gaza the same day from gunshots by Israeli soldiers, according to Palestinian medics. A week earlier, when 12 Israelis were killed in suicide bombings within 48 hours, Tel Aviv did not launch major reprisals in the West Bank and Gaza as it has often done in the past. Some 700 Israelis and more than 2,000 Palestinians have been killed since the conflict flared

up in September 2000.

The Israeli government has also promised to release about 100 Palestinian prisoners held in "administrative detention," under which Tel Aviv imprisons people indefinitely without charges or trial. Most of the 100 were due to be released soon or are chronically ill. There are 1,100 such "administrative" inmates among the more than 5,000 Palestinians in Israeli jails today.

## G-8 backs U.S. campaign against Iran

**Continued from front page**

as a cop against those the U.S. rulers target as "terrorists"—especially Hezbollah, a Lebanese group with ties to Tehran.

Washington has maintained a hostile policy toward Iran since the 1979 revolution, when workers and farmers overthrew the U.S.-backed dictatorship of the shah, bringing down one of the key pillars of imperialist domination in the region. While the government that replaced the shah is a capitalist regime, it has often remained at odds with U.S. imperialism and has not been able to roll back all the political and social gains that working people made through their struggles, nor has it crushed their aspirations and anti-imperialist sentiments.

### Pressure to roll up Hezbollah

When U.S. officials first accused Tehran of "harboring" members of Al Qaeda who supposedly organized several bombings in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, the Iranian government denied knowing of any Al Qaeda forces inside Iran. A few days later, on May 26, Hamid Reza Asefi, an Iranian foreign ministry spokesman, said that several people had been detained but they included "no senior members of the group."

White House spokesman Ari Fleischer responded by declaring that the arrests were "insufficient." On May 29, Asefi said that those who were arrested were being questioned and might include such "senior members."

Tehran has said from the beginning that it agrees with Washington's stated aim of "fighting terrorism." It says it has extradited about 150 members of Al Qaeda, including to Saudi Arabia, since Sept. 11, 2001.

Asefi accused the U.S. government of not being "serious about fighting terrorism" because the U.S. occupation force in Iraq is not cracking down hard on the People's Mujahadeen, an opposition group that has carried out an armed campaign against Tehran since the 1979 Iranian revolution.

More than the demands over Al Qaeda, a major target of the U.S. campaign against Tehran over "terrorism" is the Lebanese group Hezbollah. During his trip to Syria and Lebanon in early May, U.S. secretary of state Colin Powell made a point of demanding a crackdown against this organization, which carried out a 20-year struggle against the Israeli occupation of south Lebanon.

Soon after Powell's trip to the region, Iranian president Mohammed Khatami visited Lebanon, where he spoke at a rally alongside leaders of Hezbollah and pledged continued support to the group.

Continuing the propaganda drive against Iran and Hezbollah, a U.S. federal judge

ruled May 30 that the Iranian government was culpable in the 1983 bombing by Hezbollah of a U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut. Judge Royce Lambreth proclaimed, "The court finds that it is beyond question that Hezbollah and its agents received massive material and technical support from the Iranian government." He ruled that Tehran should pay damages to the families of those killed in the attack."

### Threatening Iran's nuclear program

The U.S. rulers' other central aim in its campaign against Iran is to destroy the possibility of Tehran developing nuclear weapons, including by military action if need be. There is no indication, however, that they are preparing an invasion of Iran, which they recognize would meet with more resistance than their assault on Iraq.

Instead, Washington is pushing to have the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) declare Tehran to be in violation of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty when it issues a report on Iran June 16.

Tehran has said it is building a nuclear power plant at Bushire and uranium fuel facilities at Arak and Natanz, but insists they are for meeting the country's rising energy needs, not for military purposes.

Following inspections of these facilities in February, IAEA chief Mohammed El-Baradei called for the Iranian government to sign an "additional protocol" giving IAEA agents greater access to the country's nuclear facilities and territory, including with no prior notice. Such an agreement would also require providing "early notification" about the design of a facility.

On May 29 Iranian foreign minister Kamal Kharrazi stressed his government's co-operation with the IAEA, and said it would sign the additional protocol on condition of "lifting all the restrictions imposed on Iran's access to nuclear technology." Iranian officials have noted that the governments of the United States and many members of the European Union do not accept such inspections of their own facilities.

The Bush administration accuses the governments of China, Russia, and north Korea of assisting Tehran in acquiring nuclear weapons materials and ballistic missiles. In May the U.S. State Department issued a directive banning imports to the United States from North China Industries, a state-owned Chinese company that it claims has sold missile technology to Iran.

Despite the unmistakable character of Washington's threats against Tehran, Iranian officials appear to be in a state of denial, downplaying the likelihood of a U.S. military assault. "Unlike Iraq under Sad-

Tel Aviv has also promised to turn over to the Palestinian Authority funds from taxes it has withheld—at least 50 million shekels (\$11.4 million) per month.

After a trip to Israel by U.S. assistant secretary of state William Burns and Elliot Abrams, who heads the Middle East desk at the U.S. National Security Council, Sharon said he would announce at the Aqaba meeting that he would order the evacuation of less than a dozen "illegal settlement outposts," according to the June 2 *Ha'aretz*. There are dozens of these Zionist settlements in the occupied territories built since March 2001 in areas that not even Tel Aviv terms "state land."

Since the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, when the IDF seized the West Bank and Gaza, the Israeli regime has established hundreds of Jewish settlements throughout the territories and has moved more than 200,000 settlers—largely right-wing Zionists—there. Sharon has been one of the architects of the settlement movement.

Sharon also promised the new Palestinian prime minister, Mahmoud Abbas, after a May 29 meeting in Jerusalem between the two, that his army is ready to withdraw from most Palestinian urban centers as soon as Palestinian police can guarantee "security."

### Palestinian Authority welcomes moves

The Palestinian Authority has largely welcomed these steps. "This was a good start," said Palestinian information minister

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dam we are not a dictatorship, but a democracy," said Iranian foreign minister Kamal Kharrazi in an interview with the German magazine *Der Spiegel* released May 31. In response to statements by U.S. officials condemning the Iranian government for its support to Hezbollah, Kharrazi said, "All policy in the United States is designed to make us the scapegoat. But we will not do them that favor. We are determined to play a positive role."

### Paris, Berlin back pressure on Iran

Unlike the invasion of Iraq, where U.S. and French imperialist interests openly clashed, the French government and other imperialist powers such as Germany have generally expressed support for cranking up pressure against Iran. A French foreign ministry spokesman, commenting in April on talks between Paris and Tehran on the nonproliferation treaty, said, "We insisted on strict observance of commitments and emphasized the importance of signing on to the enhanced IAEA safeguard agreements.... We support the idea of a nuclear-weapons-free area in the region."

The heads of state at the summit of the G-8—Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the UK, the United States, and Russia—signed onto a declaration denouncing alleged nuclear weapons programs in Iran and north Korea unanimously.

"We will not ignore the implications of Iran's advanced nuclear program," the G-8 statement said. "We stress the importance of Iran's full compliance with its obligation under the nonproliferation treaty. We urge Iran to sign and implement an I.A.E.A. Additional Protocol without delay or conditions. We offer our strongest support to comprehensive I.A.E.A. examination of this country's nuclear program."

Calling proliferation of such weapons, along with "the spread of international terrorism," the "pre-eminent threat to international security," the G-8 heads of state said they would use many means at their disposal against these so-called threats. In a reference to force, they said they could employ, "if necessary, other means in accordance with international law."

The U.S. pressure has intensified divisions within the ruling class in Iran. In a speech to the *majlis* (parliament) May 28, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the top cleric in the Iranian government, denounced the imperial arrogance of the U.S. demands. At the same time, press reports in Tehran claimed that Mohsen Rezaei, an associate of former president Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, was probing the possibility to restore relations with Washington.



# Miami event protests U.S. anti-Cuba policy

BY ERIC SIMPSON  
AND LAWRENCE MIKESH

MIAMI—Some 150 people attended a public meeting held here May 23 to defend Cuba in the face of the U.S. government's latest provocations against the Caribbean nation. The event was held in Little Haiti, the heart of the large Haitian community.

Co-sponsored by the Miami Coalition to End the U.S. Embargo of Cuba and by the Haitian rights organization Veye Yo, the meeting was called to demand, "Washington: Hands off Cuba!" and "Kite Kiba viv!"—"Let Cuba live" in Creole.

Organizers of the event distributed hundreds of fliers, with versions in English, Spanish, and Creole, in the week before the meeting. Prompted by the stepped-up U.S. threats and provocations against Cuba, including the expulsion of Cuban diplomats in Washington and New York, the publicity explained that "Now is the time to stand in solidarity with Cuba! Now is the time to demand equal treatment for Haitians!"

The meeting reflected the respect the Cuban Revolution enjoys among many workers who are Haitian, as well as the outrage against the discrimination experienced by Haitian immigrants, particularly at the hands of the U.S. government.

The meeting was organized to answer the recent propaganda campaign against Cuba promoted by Washington and the big-business media. That campaign has centered on the arrests of 75 opponents of the revolution who were convicted in April on charges of collaborating with Washington in its longstanding efforts to overthrow the Cuban Revolution. The propaganda has also focused on measures taken by Havana to end a spate of violent hijackings of planes and vessels between August 2002 and April of this year—particularly the trials and summary executions of three hijackers who had seized a ferry and threatened to kill its passengers in their effort to commandeer the boat to Florida.

Those attending the event included members of Veye Yo, residents of the neighborhood, and individuals who are active in

groups opposed to U.S. policy towards Cuba. The meeting was conducted in Creole and English with translation to Spanish.

## Biased immigration policy

"Cuban immigrants coming illegally by sea are immediately granted the papers necessary to become legal immigrants in the U.S.," said Andrés Gómez, one of the speakers. Gómez is a leader of the Antonio Maceo Brigade, an organization of Cuban-Americans who support the Cuban Revolution.

U.S. officials carry out this policy "not because they love those Cubans but because they hate the Cuban Revolution," said Gómez. "Since the revolution started in 1959, the U.S. has maintained a discriminatory immigration policy. If those same Cubans that come by boat would go to the U.S. embassy and ask for a visa, they would be disqualified. They make them come by sea to show to the rest of the world that people are willing to die to leave Cuba—the communist hell."

Gómez was referring to the 1966 Cuban Adjustment Act, through which Cubans landing on U.S. shores are eligible to become permanent U.S. residents within one year, unlike all other immigrants.

Washington has also limited visas to Cubans seeking to immigrate, in violation of 1994 and 1995 U.S.-Cuban accords, which stipulated that the U.S. government would grant 20,000 visas a year to Cuban applicants. As a result, thousands of Cubans—often lured by smugglers—have tried to reach the United States on flimsy rafts and boats. Many have drowned in the process, joining countless Haitians, Dominicans, Mexicans, and others who have died trying to reach the United States.

These immigration policies, together with the refusal by U.S. authorities to prosecute hijackers from Cuba, have given a green light to individuals to commandeer planes and boats in Cuba and force them to chart a course to the United States.

"If the U.S. government says it is fighting against terrorism, why does it welcome terrorists who hijack an airplane to come to the U.S.?" Veye Yo leader Lavarice Gaudin



Militant/Eric Simpson

About 150 people attended event in Miami to oppose Washington's latest provocations against Cuba. Max Lesnick (at microphone) of Alianza Martiana addresses audience.

asked the audience, referring to one of the recent hijackings from Cuba. "Not only did they kidnap the airplane, but when the airplane got here, the U.S. government sold the airplane. If [Cuban] President Fidel Castro did not do what he did to those terrorists, then you would see more planes leave Cuba and more boats come here," he said, referring to the execution of three hijackers of the passenger ferry.

Max Lesnick of Alianza Martiana, which opposes U.S. policy toward Cuba, said, "When Haitians come to this country, they are rejected—for being poor, for being Black, and for not accepting the dictates of the ruling racist minority. But when Cubans come like Haitians, by sea, the benefits flow because they are enemies of Cuba. They are admitted without discrimination."

Haitian rights defender Marleine Bastien explained, "Now the government is saying that these Haitians are a threat to national security and that terrorists from Afghanistan and other countries would use Haiti to get into the U.S. If it wasn't so sad it would be almost laughable."

Bastien, who heads the social service organization Haitian Women of Miami, added, "219 Haitians came on October 29," referring to a boatload of refugees that reached the beaches of Miami last year. Of these, "52 were allowed to qualify as refugees. The sick were released, but there are 50 still detained," including women and small children.

A demonstration was held May 30 in front of the immigration police building here to demand the Haitians' release.

## 'Cubans willing to defend revolution'

"As a Haitian, I am interested in the Cuban Revolution. A year ago I went to Cuba. I found there are over 1,500 Haitians who are studying in Cuba," Gaudin said. "When I talked to young Cubans, they told me they were willing to die to defend the revolution. This especially impressed me as a Black person."

"Under Batista, before the revolution, the Black man was the slave of the white man. But now you find Blacks throughout high government positions," he said, referring to the revolutionary struggle that overthrew the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista in 1959.

"Cuba is not what we see on television and read in the papers here. You have to go there yourself to see what is happening."

Nicole Sarmiento, a student at the University of Miami, spoke for a group of young people in the Miami area who, along with dozens of others around the country, will travel to Cuba on July 24–31 on the Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange.

The purpose of this one-week trip to Cuba, Sarmiento said, is "to see the living example of a people who have made a revolution." At her prompting, 10 people who are part of the Youth Exchange walked up to the front of the room, receiving a warm welcome from the audience. Among the 10 was a group that had driven five hours from Tampa to participate in the meeting. She urged other youth in the audience to get involved and be part of the trip.

"We all know Cuba is under attack now. To attack any country, the U.S. just creates a pretext: either you're a terrorist or a communist," Gaudin said. "We, who are living in the United States, must demonstrate against the attack on Cuba. Just like Bush went to [war against] Iraq, you never know when he will be willing to go to Cuba without justification. It is up to you to assume your responsibility, to denounce the kinds of aggression the U.S. is carrying out against Cuba."

"Today the Cubans face more aggression against their island," Andrés Gómez said. "This is nothing new. You remember well that in April 1961 the U.S. sent 2,000 [exiled] Cubans to invade Cuba. They were defeated in 72 hours," he said to applause from the audience, referring to the Cuban victory against the Bay of Pigs invasion. "The only reason those acts of aggression over the years have been defeated is that the Cuban people have resisted united. There is a determination by the vast majority of the Cuban people never to again lose their independence, their freedom, gained in the last 44 years of revolution."

Other speakers at the event included Mel Reeves and Chris Hoepfner from the Miami Coalition Against the Embargo, as well as Tony Jeanthénor of Veye Yo.

## New Jersey students build Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange

BY ANGEL LARISCY

NEWARK, New Jersey—"I've always been intrigued by Cuba; it is the best country in the Caribbean economically and politically," said Rutgers University senior Zabdriel Valera. "Cuba is the only Latin American country that's been able to stand up against the U.S. and survive."

Valera, the past president of the Black Organization of Students (BOS) at the Rutgers campus here, is one of a dozen students and other youth from northern New Jersey who are going to Cuba to participate in the Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange, scheduled for July 24–31. BOS is sponsoring the New Jersey delegation, together with the New Jersey Network on Cuba.

The visit is hosted by Cuba's Federation of University Students, Union of Young Communists, Federation of High School Students, and the Saiz Brothers Cultural Association.

Groups of young people in cities around the United States are preparing to travel to that Caribbean nation to participate in the Youth Exchange. On the trip they will meet and exchange ideas with Cubans—of their generation and others—and see Cuba firsthand. On their return, they will be better able to answer the lies peddled by the U.S. government about Cuba's socialist revolution.

Organizing meetings have been held twice a week to plan an array of outreach and fund-raising activities, as well as begin educational work to prepare for the trip.

Fund-raising is particularly important since many of those seeking to go to Cuba do not have all the funds needed to cover the costs of the trip. The total cost is expected to add up to about \$1,100, including airfare, housing, and food. The fund-raising activities complement the efforts each individual is making to save up money for the trip.

A fund-raising letter has been sent out to a number of organizations and individuals seeking their assistance to enable the largest delegation possible to visit Cuba.

On May 28, the second day of summer session at Rutgers-Newark, students set up an information table and a bake sale to publicize the trip and raise money. In a few hours \$80 was collected. The event is planned on a weekly basis through the month of June.

Additional funds are being collected through the sale of raffle tickets, a poetry slam, and a party. A three-week Cuban film series beginning June 4 at the Rutgers library is featuring *Buena Vista Social Club*, *Death of a Bureaucrat*, and *Strawberries and Chocolate*. A send-off rally and banquet will take place July 19.

Ryan-Katherine Sisco, 22, a graduate student at Rutgers who went to Cuba last year for a month of study at the University of Havana, learned about the Youth Exchange from seeing a flyer posted on campus. Sisco is excited about the Youth Exchange because it is organized to learn more about the Cuban Revolution.

"Cuba is a fascinating place because the people constantly want to engage in dialogue on politics," she said.

Others going on the trip have just begun to learn about Cuba and want to find out the truth about that country. Regina Fitch, 21, heard about the Exchange from a member of BOS and saw it as an opportunity to see Cuba for herself. She became involved in political activity in February, protesting the U.S.-led war against Iraq. Fitch said that, while she doesn't have much information about Cuba, she is "going with an open mind to learn as much as I can."

For more information on the Third Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange, contact the Los Angeles Youth Exchange, which is serving as a national clearinghouse for information on the trip, at cubasovereignty@aol.com, 1498 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90026.

## Third Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange Havana, Cuba July 24–July 31

Young people from across the United States will be traveling to Cuba in July to participate in the Third Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange. They will meet with youth in that country, exchange ideas with them, and see firsthand the truth about Cuba's socialist revolution. They will take part in the 50th anniversary celebration of the assault on Moncada, which launched the revolutionary war that brought down a U.S.-backed dictatorship. The project is hosted by the Union of Young Communists, Federation of University Students, and other youth organizations in Cuba. A national clearinghouse for information on the exchange has been set up in Los Angeles. Contact them at the e-mail address below to find out how you can join—**time is running out for new applicants, so act now!**



For more information contact:  
cubasovereignty@aol.com



# Saudi Arabia: fruit of imperialist carve-up of region

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The U.S. government's recent decision to close its military bases in Saudi Arabia and the recent bombings in the Saudi capital targeting U.S. personnel have highlighted the growing strains between Washington and the government in Riyadh.

What lies behind these strains is the drive by the U.S. rulers to gain more control over the oil and other resources of the Mideast—at the expense both of their imperialist rivals in Europe and Japan and of the various governments in the region, including the royal family in Saudi Arabia.

At the end of April, within two weeks of the U.S. seizure of Baghdad, the Pentagon announced it would withdraw most of its 5,000 troops from Saudi Arabia and set up its main regional command center in the Gulf state of Qatar, which Washington considers a more reliable ally.

In an interview in the upcoming issue of *Vanity Fair* magazine, U.S. deputy defense secretary Paul Wolfowitz cited one outcome of the U.S.-led assault on Iraq that was “almost unnoticed, but it's huge”: it removed Washington's need to keep U.S. forces in Saudi Arabia.

## Growing U.S.-Saudi strains

Under U.S. pressure, the Saudi authorities have rounded up more than a dozen people in connection with the May 12 suicide bombings in Riyadh that left 34 people dead, including eight U.S. citizens. Among those arrested were three religious figures who were accused not of being involved in the attacks but of speaking favorably about them.

Deep opposition in Saudi Arabia and throughout the Mideast to the imperialist assault on Iraq, as well as to the U.S. rulers' hostility toward the Palestinian national struggle, has exacerbated problems for the monarchy because of its dependence on Washington. As a result, the Saudi government has placed some limits on the U.S. presence in the country. During the 1991 Gulf War, the U.S. military had used Saudi Arabia as a staging ground for its attack on Iraq.

Strains between the royal family and Washington intensified following a 1996 bombing that killed 19 U.S. marines at the Khobar Towers apartment complex in Riyadh. Washington was irked by the refusal of Saudi officials conducting the investigation into the bombing to allow the FBI to be part of the interrogation of witnesses.

The tensions deepened in the wake of the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon when Riyadh refused a demand by the FBI to be given free reign to round up, interrogate, and take away any Saudi resident it deemed

a “terrorist suspect.”

Over the past months, some voices in U.S. ruling circles have argued for taking a more aggressive stance toward Saudi Arabia, including the possibility of backing a palace coup by a faction of the royal family that would constitute a more reliable pro-U.S. government.

In July 2002 a top Pentagon advisory board described Saudi Arabia as an enemy of Washington and recommended it be given an ultimatum to stop “backing terrorism” or face seizure of its oil fields and its investments in the United States.

The wars and upheavals in the Mideast have shone a spotlight on the reactionary social structures and semi-feudal foundations of the kingdoms throughout the Arabian Peninsula. Saudi Arabia is ruled by a monarchy. There is an appointed consultative assembly called the Majlis Al-Shura that has no legislative authority. This regime, like other monarchies in the Gulf, has had increasing difficulties in subjecting the population to continued denial of democratic rights and the extreme oppression of women.

At the beginning of this year, for example, the Saudi royal family issued a “Charter for Reform of the Arab Condition.” The charter makes reference to the need for “internal reform and enhanced political participation.”

The *Christian Science Monitor* reported January 15 that Saudi opposition currents “have increased calls for elections and a new constitution.” Spokespeople for some of these forces have even been allowed to be interviewed on regional satellite television, including Al Jazeera.

Women's education has been taken away from religious authorities, and women now attend school together with men. Women can now apply for their own identity cards. Previously the only form of identity permitted for women was the ID card of a male relative. By law they cannot travel abroad without a male guardian's permission and escort.

## Origins of Saudi Arabia

Like the other Gulf kingdoms, the Saudi state rests on a narrow social base of a parasitic merchant, banking, and oil rentier ruling class.

The Saudi monarchy consolidated its rule over the country as a willing supplicant to imperialist oil interests at the opening of the 1930s. A by-product of the carve-up of the Ottoman Empire following the defeat of the German-led alliance in World War I, Saudi Arabia holds the world's largest known reserves of oil, an indispensable resource for the world capitalist economy.

Saudi Arabia is home to one of the world's oldest cultures but is also one of the newest modern states. Until the 1930s the region was ruled by families heading competing tribal clans, among them the powerful Al Saud family. They rode a religious revival in Islam, led by Muslim leader Muhammad ibn Abd al Wahab, to dominance over most of Arabia. For the Saudi family, this alliance with the muwahhidun, as the religious movement is known, enabled it to control most of Arabia by 1811.

## Alliance of monarchy, Muslim current

Today, the alliance with this current of Islamic clerics remains an important pillar of the royal family's rule. It is seized on by some in U.S. ruling circles as an argument for adopting a more aggressive policy against the Saudi government.

Saudi Arabia came into existence as a result of the breakup of the Ottoman Empire following the first interimperialist war in 1914–18. That empire, allied with German imperialism, was on the losing side of the war. As the victors took the spoils, it was divided up between the British and French imperialists on the backs of the Arabs and



Above, U.S. tanks in Saudi Arabia during 1991 Gulf War. Washington used the semicolonial country as base to launch its attack. In face of opposition throughout Mideast to the imperialist assault, Saudi regime placed limits on U.S. presence. Strains between the two governments have increased. Right, British admiral and Saudi minister on *H.M.S. Daedalus* in 1976. Saudi kingdom was created under London's domination.



other peoples of the Mideast.

The House of Saud consolidated its power in a region that fell under a British “sphere of influence.”

In the early 1900s, the muwahhidun established agricultural colonies where people from different tribes supporting the Saud lived together. The inhabitants of these colonies were called brothers, or ikhwan in Arabic. They provided the Al Saud with a formidable military force and would become the backbone of the first and second Saudi dynasties.

Britain, the strongest imperialist power in the Mideast at the time, considered the Gulf region as the western flank of its colony in India. Among other problems facing its colonial rule, London was anxious about the proximity of the Ottoman regime to India and the Suez Canal in Egypt. At the same time German imperialism was increasing its political and economic relations with the Ottoman rulers.

The Al Saud family had a contentious history of relations with the Ottoman rulers. It attempted to play off the Ottomans and the British against each other. Earlier in the 19th century, alarmed at the rise of the Al Saud, the Ottoman rulers dispatched military forces to contain them. In 1818 they captured the Al Saud capital of Diriyah, bringing an end to the first Saudi dynasty. Six years later the Al Saud regained control of central Arabia but were defeated by a rival family with the aid of the Ottoman regime. The Al Saud were forced into exile in Kuwait.

By 1902, Abd al Aziz, the young heir to the Saudi house, had recaptured Riyadh and forced the Ottoman governor to recognize him as a client in the region. He also made overtures to the British government to rid the region of the Ottoman presence. Finally in 1913 Aziz's armies drove the forces of the decaying Ottoman Empire out of eastern Arabia without British support.

Over the next two decades Abd al Aziz subdued the various regions of Arabia that in 1932 would form the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. His rule was greatly aided by the discovery of oil in the region in the late 1920s. Huge royalties from concessions granted by Abd al Aziz to imperialist oil companies gave the Al Saud family a decisive financial advantage over its rivals.

The British, who called the shots in the region at the time, prevented the Al Saud from taking over areas of the Gulf where London had established protectorates with various ruling dynasties. They also opposed the extension of Al Saud's rule beyond the Jordanian, Syrian, and Iraqi deserts, defining the kingdom's borders.

With the discovery of oil, U.S. imperialism began to move in on Saudi Arabia. It took World War II, however, for Washington to establish itself as the number one power in the region, displacing London and Paris. Since that time oil production and distribution has been dominated there by the main U.S. and other imperialist oil monopolies.

Saudi Arabia joined the Arab League at its founding in 1945. When French, British, and Israeli forces invaded Egypt in 1956 following that government's nationalization of the Suez Canal, the Saudi regime

broke diplomatic relations with Paris and London and declared an embargo on oil shipments to the two countries.

Gamal Abdel Nasser came to power in Egypt after overthrowing a reactionary monarchy in 1952, and this revolt inspired revolutionary republican attitudes in other Arab countries. To counter Egyptian influence, Saud formed an alliance with the monarchies in Jordan and Iraq in 1956. He also opposed the union of Egypt and Syria in 1958 to form the United Arab Republic. In 1962, when rebels influenced by Egypt's example overthrew the Imam in Yemen and declared a republic there, the Saudi and Jordanian kings sent troops to aid the Yemeni royalist forces.

## Weakened position of regime

Together with the monarchies in Iran and Jordan, the Saudi regime was one of the reactionary bastions used by imperialism to maintain its domination of the region. In January 1982 Washington delivered the first of 60 F-15 warplanes to Riyadh under an agreement to counter “communist aggression” in the region.

The Iranian revolution, which overthrew the shah in 1979, sent shock waves throughout the Mideast. In response, the Saudi monarchy supported the U.S.-promoted war by the Saddam Hussein regime against Iran in 1980-88.

The same year as the popular insurrection in Iran, some 500 rebels seized the Great Mosque of Mecca, calling for the overthrow of the Saudi regime. In two weeks of fighting 100 rebels and 27 Saudi soldiers were killed. After the revolt was crushed, the regime organized the public beheading of 63 rebels. In 1980 a series of revolts by Shiites in Saudi Arabia was brutally put down. To defuse the potentially explosive social tensions building up, the regime promised to reform the distribution of Saudi wealth.

When the Hussein regime invaded Kuwait in 1990, King Fahd, the new Saudi ruler, agreed to station thousands of U.S. troops in the kingdom. It took in the Kuwaiti royal family, as well as an estimated 400,000 refugees. Thousands of Saudi troops were sent to join the first U.S.-led imperialist assault on Iraq in 1991.

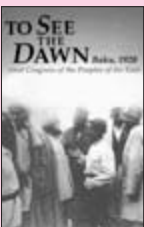
Over the past decade since that war, however, the Saudi regime has become weakened and less stable. As the withdrawal of U.S. troops indicates, imperialism regards it as more of a political liability than a base of support for its aims in the region. The recent invasion and occupation of Iraq is a reminder that the existence of Saudi Arabia and the current national borders in the Mideast are no more real than before they were created by the imperialist powers.

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# ‘Surplus’ cars and deflation hit auto industry

BY ILONA GERSH

DETROIT—U.S. auto companies are sitting on an “overflow of unsold cars and trucks that is the largest backlog in U.S. history,” according to the *Detroit Free Press*. Almost 4 million unsold vehicles are backed up on auto-dealer lots, at assembly plants, and at hushed-up overflow sites like the Michigan State Fairgrounds in northwest Detroit.

Like their Asia- and Europe-based competitors, the Big Three U.S. auto companies continue to produce more cars than the market can bear—that is, than can be sold at a profit. The overproduction has put an increasing downward pressure on prices. The Big Three are General Motors, Ford, and Chrysler—now DaimlerChrysler, after a 1998 merger with the giant German corporation that also produces Mercedes Benz—branded vehicles.

The deflation in auto prices is thinly camouflaged by the hefty price incentives and no-interest deals launched by the U.S. auto companies in the third year of lagging sales. The zero-percent financing on five-year loans that they offer, plus rebates of up to \$3,200 per vehicle, have failed to put the brakes on the downward sales spiral, however.

At Chrysler, the annualized sales rate declined last month to 16.5 million units from 17.3 million units—a 4 percent drop over the past 12 months. The two larger companies have recorded even worse results. Ford is almost 7 percent down, and GM’s 9 percent drop includes a 26 percent slump in car sales.

“Until we get a real decent economic

also spun out of the Big Three.

Chrysler, for its part, has announced its intention to sell or divest its remaining parts plants.

Delphi and Visteon bosses say that in contract negotiations due to begin in mid-July they want wages to be brought down to levels comparable with those at other suppliers. At \$22 to \$33 an hour, wages at the two auto parts makers are equivalent to those won by assembly workers at the Big Three, and contrast with the \$14 paid by other parts makers.

Meanwhile, thousands of nonunion as well as unionized workers at many other parts plants start at \$6 per hour.

More than 60 percent of auto workers are employed by parts plants, not counting those at Visteon and Delphi.

The Big Three face heavy competition not just from each other but also from Japanese, Korean, and German auto manufacturers. Asia- and Europe-based companies are taking a bigger share of the total U.S. market—pushing the U.S. market share held by the Big Three down from 74 percent in 1992, to 62 percent in 2002.

The growth of Japan’s Toyota, “Detroit’s chief competitor,” is “frightening,” wrote

## New protests in France against attack on pensions



Militant/Nat London

On June 3, in a new round of union protests in France against a bill attacking retirement pensions, tens of thousands of teachers, flight controllers, train and subway drivers, truckers, journalists, postal workers, bank employees, and other workers walked off the job throughout the country. On May 28 the French cabinet approved the bill, which would require workers to labor for 42 years in order to receive a full pension—from the current 37.5 years for public employees and 40 years for workers at private companies. Above, port workers in Marseille join May 13 actions that mobilized workers in cities across France. Over the past month hundreds of thousands have carried out rolling strikes and demonstrations against the government’s “pension reform” measures. The bosses and the government of President Jacques Chirac argue that the curbs on retirement benefits are needed because an aging workforce will strain the budget. The next step will be a vote in the French parliament, where the ruling Gaullist party, the Union for the Popular Movement, is pressing for approval before the summer recess.

reorganization will also likely be on the table as the employers press their demands for ever higher productivity.

Pensions and health care will also be central issues. More than 2 million spouses, dependents, and retired auto workers rely on pension and health care benefits wrested from the Big Three. GM has by far the most retirees on its books with 360,000, followed by Ford with 115,000 and Chrysler with 80,000. After recording heavy losses in stock market investments, GM claims that its pension fund is underfunded by around \$25 billion. Ford and Chrysler have also dipped into their funds.

The nationwide UAW contract covers workers at the Big Three, Delphi and Visteon. More than 900 locals, many of them amalgamated locals representing workers in more than one plant, have separate contracts.

### Strikes in Michigan and Indiana

Two such locals, in Michigan and Indiana, are presently on strike in response to company demands that workers foot more of the health insurance bill.

UAW Local 155 represents 115 members on strike against the Michigan Rivet Corp. in Warren, Michigan, just outside of Detroit. The company supplies nuts, bolts, and other small metal parts to the auto industry. Their contract expired April 6, and they worked without a contract until May 12.

The company had sales of more than \$40 million in 2000. It is demanding major concessions from the union. The UAW says it is prepared to accept a 10 percent co-payment for health-care costs within the employer-approved network, and a 20 percent co-payment outside the network. But Michigan Rivet demanded twice as

much. Previously, the company paid all these costs.

The union’s last offer was to increase co-pay on prescriptions to \$20 for brand-name drugs—one half the company’s proposal—and from \$5 to \$10 for generic drugs. Company demands “would be too much for our retirees who have four or five drugs they have to take for like a heart problem,” said Dan Donnellon, UAW shop chairman at the plant. There are about 60 retirees from the plant, he said.

“We can’t go as far as they are pushing,” said Donnellon. “I think we are fighting over exactly what the Big Three will be dealing with later this year. A lot of other locals have been supportive of us, knowing that.”

Further southwest, 100 workers at Auburn Gear in Albany, Indiana, have been on strike for more than seven months. The company manufactures automotive differentials, as well as gear drives for light construction and agricultural equipment. The workers walked out November 4 after the bosses proposed terminating health insurance benefits for retired workers and their spouses. The company responded to their action by unilaterally canceling the benefits.

“What we do for those folks [the retirees] we do for ourselves,” said Sal Bevilacqua, president of UAW Local 825.

Fred Smith, a machine operator, said, “I’m going to be a retiree someday.” Like the other workers, Smith is receiving \$200 in weekly strike pay, one-third of his usual wage.

The *Journal Gazette* reported that Auburn Gear “has continued to crank out parts by hiring replacement workers, but the tactic hasn’t arm-twisted the union into putting down their picket signs.”



Militant/Ilona Gersh

Ford’s hushed-up overflow lot at Michigan State Fairgrounds, where the automaker has stored some of the cars it has produced but is unable to sell at a profit.

recovery, I think sporadic production cuts will have to happen,” said Michael Wall, a researcher at CSM Worldwide, a Detroit-area auto-analysis firm.

Since 1999 some 55,000 jobs have been slashed by the three manufacturers and at plants operated by Visteon and Delphi, the auto parts companies connected with Ford and GM. That year the Big Three began a major reorganization, instituting “lean manufacturing” through shutting down unprofitable plants, speeding up production lines, and combining assembly jobs to cut crews. A 15 percent reduction in the workforce was the result.

In addition, ongoing shorter-term plant closings have plagued the industry, as the capitalists try to counteract the buildup of unwanted inventory.

The deepening auto crisis contributes to the rising unemployment rate in Michigan, which stood at 7 percent in March, compared to the national rate of 6 percent. The state government reported that total employment fell 26,000 over the previous year, while the ranks of the officially unemployed swelled by only 7,000. When the 19,000 unemployed who left the state are counted, the unemployment rate in the state tops 8 percent.

The sweeping reorganization of the industry came on top of Ford and GM’s 1996 sale of their parts production plants, many of which were swallowed up by Visteon and Delphi, which became the direct suppliers for the two companies. Thousands of smaller parts production shops were

Daniel Howes in a column that appeared on the front page of the May 4 *Detroit News*. “Toyota’s market capitalization of \$80 billion—the best measure of how investors value a public company—exceeds by nearly \$10 billion the total value of GM, Ford and Chrysler parent DaimlerChrysler AG combined,” Howes noted.

Toyota now commands 11 percent of the U.S. auto market and 9 percent of the U.S. truck market.

### Contract talks set for July

In the middle of this crisis the United Auto Workers (UAW) and the Big Three will begin contract negotiations in mid-July. The present contract, which covers 275,000 workers, expires September 14.

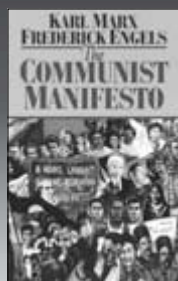
In the coming talks, auto workers face the threat of more layoffs, as the bosses hammer away at the need for greater “productivity” in response to the domestic and overseas competition. According to a report by Harbour and Associates cited in the *Detroit News*, it takes GM, Ford and Chrysler 26, 27, and 31 hours respectively to build a vehicle. In comparison, Japanese automakers need 17 to 22 hours.

GM and Ford both want a freer hand to close plants that they consider less productive—at the same time eliminating excessive capacity.

The auto bosses are likely to demand cuts in downtime between shift changes. Relief time, absenteeism, forced job changes and combinations, line speedup, and other issues that featured in the 1990s

## Further Reading

**The Communist Manifesto**  
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# What's behind crisis of 'overproduction'?

Printed below are excerpts from "What the 1987 stock market crash foretold," a resolution adopted by the 1988 convention of the Socialist Workers Party. The resolution is published in full in issue no. 10 of *New International*. This selection includes a discussion of "overproduction" of commodities as a normal feature of the functioning of capitalism, one that can graphically be seen today in auto and other industries at a time of deepening worldwide depression (see article on facing page).

Last week's *Militant* reprinted another selection from *New International* no. 10 explaining the phenomenon of deflation, which is increasingly marking the capitalist economy. The excerpts below are reprinted by permission, copyright © 1994 by *New International*.



## Cumulative consequences of falling average rate of profit

The imperialists' crisis of capital accumulation will soon enter its third decade. Like the preceding period of capitalist expansion, it has stretched across several business cycles of recession and upturn. Its consequences have been and continue to be far reaching:

### 1. Intensified interimperialist competition

The downward pressure on profit rates intensified price competition among capitalists, including on an international level. This broke down the de facto industrial monopoly held by the U.S. capitalists coming out of World War II.

When the U.S. rulers entered the war they were producing about one-third of the world's manufactures; they emerged less than four years later with that figure having leapt to one-half. That edge in their share of the world market encouraged U.S. capitalists to defer major costly postwar investment in modernization of plant and equipment in industries such as steel and auto. It enabled them to maintain price levels on the world market well above actual production costs, collecting monopoly rents in the form of superprofits.

By the end of the 1960s, however, the monopoly position of the U.S. capitalists had been challenged in one industry after another: steel, auto, farm equipment, electronics, aerospace, computer-related technology, garment, and textile. Initially the U.S. rulers faced increasing competition in the world market primarily from their Japanese, West German, and other imperialist allies. By the 1970s price competition was even growing with industrial capitalists in a handful of semicolonial countries such as South Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Taiwan. Competition for markets in cereal grains and other farm commodities has come not only from imperialist rivals, but also—as a result of the "green revolution" and a reorientation of agriculture toward the world market—from capitalists in some semicolonial countries. Stiffer competition has forced U.S. and other capitalists to bring prices down on both manufactured and agricultural commodities, reinforcing the squeeze on profit rates.

Marx's observation that "it is the fall in the profit rate that provokes the competitive struggle between capitals, not the reverse" has been confirmed once again by the events of the past twenty-five years.<sup>1</sup>

### 2. Overproduction and excess capacity

This interimperialist competition is

sharpening in a world capitalist market plagued by overproduction of commodities and excess industrial capacity.

The big-business media has stressed that manufacturing in the United States, after falling to a low of 68 percent utilization of plant and equipment during the 1982 recession, was functioning on average at about 83 percent of capacity in May 1988. What is rarely noted is that this "high" is actually the lowest level of capacity utilization at the peak of an upturn in the business cycle in the United States since the mid-1960s. By contrast, capacity utilization in 1966 went above 91 percent; in 1973, to nearly 88 percent; and in 1979, to 85 percent.<sup>2</sup>

The capitalists continue to have too much industrial capacity. They are plagued by overproduction of commodities: that is, by more output than they can sell at a high enough profit to justify expanding their productive plant and equipment. The employers have made working people pay the price through mounting work reorganization, speedup, plant shutdowns, and layoffs as they drive along the only road open to them: increasing absolute surplus value (lengthening the workday) and relative surplus value (intensifying labor through speedup and adding so-called labor-saving machinery) as much as the relationship of class forces will permit.

In the auto industry alone Ford has closed fifteen plants since 1979 and eliminated 30 percent of its employees; General Motors has announced plans to shut down at least 15 percent of its existing plant capacity and eliminate some 100,000 workers in the next few years. Seventy-five meatpacking plants were shut down between 1980 and 1985, with speedup and retooling in the remaining packinghouses resulting in increased output with a quarter million fewer workers. The workforce in steel has been cut in half with the shutdown of many mills in Pittsburgh, Birmingham, Baltimore, Gary, Chicago, and elsewhere.

The overproduction and excess capacity affecting the ruling classes in the imperialist countries is reflected not only in mounting plant shutdowns and layoffs, but also in the stagnation of trade on the world market. World trade has fallen from a yearly growth rate of nearly 9 percent between 1963 and 1973 to less than half that over the subsequent fifteen years.

Overproduction, excess capacity, plant closings, unemployment, intensification of labor, and decelerating world trade, however, have nothing to do with what billions of the world's working people need and can use. Workers and farmers are in need of food, clothing, housing, means of transportation, books, medicine, and many other goods that advances in labor productivity make less and less time-consuming to produce but that the producers themselves are less and less able to afford.

As Marx observed about the history of capitalism: "Since capital's purpose is not the satisfaction of needs but the production of profit . . . there must be a constant tension between the restricted dimensions of consumption on the capitalist basis, and production that is constantly striving to overcome these immanent barriers. Moreover, capital consists of commodities, and hence overproduction of capital involves overproduction of commodities. . . .

"It is not that too many means of subsistence are produced in relation to the existing population. On the contrary. Too little is produced to satisfy the mass of the population



Militant/Pat Shaw

**General Motors workers in Luton, England, fight plant closing and job cuts by the auto giant, February 2001. U.S. auto bosses have cut 55,000 jobs worldwide since 1999.**

in an adequate and humane way. Nor are too many means of production produced to employ the potential working population. On the contrary.... Periodically, however, too much is produced in the way of means of labour and means of subsistence, too much to function as means for exploiting the workers at a given rate of profit."<sup>3</sup>

### 3. Declining capital investment in capacity-increasing plant and equipment

Over the past decade there has been a sharp decline in the rate of new investment by U.S. capitalists in capacity-increasing plant and equipment. Factory closings and layoffs have registered the competitive pressures on the rulers to shed less productive capacity. Large amounts of value have been destroyed in the process. But stagnating profits continue to make it less worthwhile for the capitalists to invest in building new factories and purchasing major new industrial technologies that would expand productive capacity. There has been no extensive preparation by finance capital to draw new labor power in substantial amounts into expanded and modernized sectors of industrial production.

When the 1974–75 recession began, investment in construction of new factories was 172 percent higher in the United States than it had been thirteen years earlier. Over the thirteen subsequent years, however, the rate of growth in new factory construction has been cut more than half. And since the sharp 1981–82 recession, annual investment in new plant has actually fallen by nearly 25 percent, from \$17 billion in 1981 to \$13 billion in 1987. Adjusted for inflation over those six years, the drop in real terms has been much steeper.

Instead of expanding productive capacity, manufacturing investment during the post-1982 upturn in the business cycle has focused on upgrading and retooling a part of existing plants and equipment.<sup>4</sup> This investment in "laborsaving" technology has resulted, as intended, in brutally labor-intensifying reorganization of work, from meatpacking to paper production.

This speedup takes a devastating toll on health and safety, means longer hours for workers who remain on the job, and leads to permanent layoffs for many other workers. While Washington boasts that the U.S. economy has created 15 million new jobs since the upturn at the end of 1982, there has been a decline of nearly 1.5 million jobs in mining and manufacturing over that same period. And the average length of the workweek in industry has risen from thirty-nine to forty-one hours, with many factory workers putting in fifty, sixty, or more each week.

The most important revelation from the October 1987 crash was not what was happening on the world's stock and bond markets, but the destabilizing worldwide impact of what was not happening in the expansion of capital investment in capacity-increasing industrial plant and equipment....

### 9. Rising unemployment and growing relative surplus population

The capitalists' falling average rate of profit results not only in "surplus" plant, "surplus" food, and other "surplus" capital and commodities, but also in what Marx described as a "relative surplus population." The layoffs of wagedworkers and dispossession of agricultural producers proceed at an accelerating pace and outstrip capitalism's capacity to absorb this surplus labor power into new employment. The expanding reserve army of the unemployed becomes a source of pressure used by the capitalists to intensify the labor and hold down the wages of employed workers, and to increase competition among all workers.

"The overwork of the employed part of the working class swells the ranks of its reserve," Marx explained, "while, conversely, the greater pressure that the reserve by its competition exerts on the employed workers forces them to submit to over-work and subjects them to the dictates of capital. The condemnation of one part of the working class to enforced idleness by the overwork of the other part, and vice versa, becomes a means of enriching the individual capitalists."<sup>5</sup>

1. *Capital*, vol. 3, p. 365. For how these trends have played out since 1988, see the article, "Imperialism's March toward Fascism and War" [in *New International* no. 10].

2. In October 1994 the U.S. government capacity utilization figure reached 84.9 percent. Although the official consumer price increase index remained at among the lowest levels since the early 1960s, the rising capacity figures in 1994 were among the factors cited by Federal Reserve Bank board members as they made their sixth hike in interbank interest rates for the year, announced in mid-November. They conjured up the specter of overstretched production lines, sudden shortages, and consequent spikes in prices.

The truth about these capacity utilization figures, however, is that over time they reveal less, not more, about the actual functioning of capitalist production. First, these figures do not include factories, mines, and equipment that have been shut down by capitalists for now but can be brought back into production as profit needs dictate. Second, the official figures do not account for increased production achieved

through longer hours (absolute surplus value) and increased productivity (relative surplus value), as described in this section. Finally, the figures are limited to mines, mills, and factories located in the United States, failing to take account of the growing share of parts and supplies turned out in U.S.-owned plants abroad for use in domestic production.

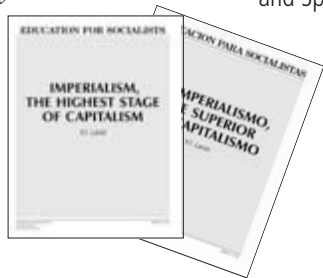
3. *Capital*, vol. 3, pp. 365–67.

4. Spending in 1993 on what the U.S. Commerce Department itself defines as "expansion"—new factories and buildings that require more workers—ran at little more than half the pace as that during periods of capitalist expansion in the 1960s. Once outlays on cost-cutting computer and information processing equipment are subtracted from equipment expenditures (for the period from the March 1991 upturn in the U.S. capitalist business cycle through June 1994), then investment for that period in new, capacity-expanding equipment actually declined 5 percent and spending on the construction or expansion of factory buildings declined more than 25 percent.

5. *Capital*, vol. 1, p. 789.

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# Origin of social classes, family, and the state

Below are excerpts from the introduction by Evelyn Reed to *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* by Frederick Engels, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for June. This edition also includes Engels's preface to the fourth edition of the book, published in 1891. Copyright © 1972 Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission.

BY EVELYN REED

Engels's *Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*, published almost a hundred years ago, is today enjoying a

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

resurgence of popularity. This came about with the emergence of the women's liberation movement in the United States and Canada during the late 1960s. Along with organizing and acting to end the deep-rooted discrimination against the female sex, women today want to know how their oppression originated and whether it has always existed. That is why so many feminists are turning to Engels's classic work, a book that can not only arm the movement theoretically but inspire it with confidence that liberation can be won.

This study was based upon the findings set forth by Lewis H. Morgan, founder of American anthropology, in his *Ancient Society*, published in 1877. Engels's book appeared in 1884 in Zurich in an edition of 5,000 copies. For its fourth printing in 1891 he prepared a revised version with

a new preface which took into account additional data on the subject....

Morgan's data confirmed the Marxist principle that social institutions are not unchanging or eternal but come into existence at certain periods of history as a result of specific socioeconomic conditions. Engels gave unstinting praise to Morgan's thesis that the maternal gens or clan preceded the father-family in history, proving that even the family institution is no exception to that rule. This discovery, he said, held the same importance for anthropology as Darwin's theory of evolution had for biology and Marx's theory of surplus value for political economy. "Since its discovery," he wrote, "we know in which direction to conduct our researches, what to investigate, and how to classify the results of our investigations...."

Morgan and his school wrote during the time of Darwin when the theory of evolution was first enunciated and its fresh breezes were sweeping the western world. Just as Darwin had sought to uncover the processes of organic evolution, the pioneer anthropologists searched for the origin and evolution of social life. They paid considerable attention to the activities of human beings in procuring the necessities of life, and by studying the advances made in the productive forces, sought to chart the successive stages of social development. By these means Morgan delineated the three main epochs of human history: savagery, barbarism, and civilization. (Morgan derived these terms from earlier scholars and did not give them any pejorative sense. He had the highest regard for the achievements of precivilized peoples.)

In savagery, the economy was founded upon food-gathering and hunting, although simple garden-culture made its appearance toward the end of this period. Barbarism began with the introduction of agriculture and stock-raising, which provided a surplus of food for larger populations, greater productivity, and a higher culture. Civilization was ushered in with the de-



Militant/Carole Lesnick

**January 1999 action in Los Angeles in defense of the right to abortion. Women's second-class status didn't always exist, Engels explained, and by revolutionary struggle the working class can end it.**

velopment of metallurgy, trade, and other major advances.

Although some uncertainty remains on the exact time scale of these three epochs, they can be approximately measured as follows: Savagery began with the emergence of the first humans (or hominids) from our ancestral branch of the anthropoids about a million years ago. Barbarism came in about eight thousand years ago, and gave way to the first urban populations from Egypt through Mesopotamia and India to China. The Greek and Roman city-states of some three thousand years ago represent the beginning of Western civilization. The period of savagery, therefore, was by far the longest epoch, lasting for more than 99 percent of human existence on earth, while the two later periods of barbarism and civilization together cover less than one percent.

But the pioneer anthropologists did more than disclose this uneven tempo of progress. They discovered that primitive society was different from civilized society in every major respect. Engels shows in his book how and why they were op-

posite socioeconomic systems. Civilized society is founded on the private ownership of property; it is class divided, with a wealthy possessing class exploiting the working mass. A state apparatus enforces this rule of the rich. It is characterized by inequalities of all kinds, economic, social, and sexual. Male supremacy and female inferiority are integral features of this patriarchal class system.

Savage society, on the other hand, was based upon the collective ownership of the means of production, cooperative social relations, and complete equality in all spheres of life, including sexual equality. Due to the absence of private property, such key institutions of the private-property system as the state and the patriarchal family were nonexistent. Tribal society was a self-governing community in which the elected chiefs claimed no superiority to any other members.

There was no compulsory family institution with the father in command, exacting subservience, obedience, and conformity from wife and children, any more than there was a coercive state apparatus. Savage society was founded upon the cardinal principles of liberty and equality for all; it was a sisterhood of women and a brotherhood of men in a tribal commune which Morgan and his cothinkers called a system of "primitive communism." One of its most striking features was the influential and esteemed position of women. Whether savage society is called a clan commune, a tribal commune, or a matriarchal commune, it stands in the sharpest contrast to civilized patriarchal class society which supplanted it.

These disclosures indicate that a drastic social change occurred in the transition from savagery to civilization, that is, in the period of barbarism. Although this process has yet to be studied in depth, it is clear that hidden in the period of barbarism a major social and sexual changeover took place. The structure of society became transformed from an equalitarian commune to an oppressive class system serving the interests of private property; and women fell from their former high position in the primitive commune to a degraded status in civilized patriarchal society.

This momentous transformation did not occur in one stride but gradually, over some five thousand years of the barbaric period....

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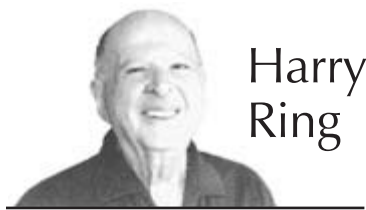
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**Dig this**—To compensate for “past wrongs,” WorldCom will pay a \$500 million fine to the Security and Exchange Commission. A *USA Today* editorial rapped it as a “slap on the wrist.” It cited



Harry Ring

the book-padding figures that ran in the billions. But someone at the currently bankrupt telecom giant has a sense of humor. As part of the settlement, WorldCom will

receive a tax refund for the extra taxes it paid for fictitious income.

**Welcome to the club**—“Coke investigates internal fraud investigations—Former worker accuses firm of inflating revenue.”—News headline.

**The golden years**—The number of workers 65 and over holding or seeking jobs has increased 50 percent since 1980, reports the Census Bureau. The change is attributed to workers living longer, and worrying more about stock savings going down the pit.

**...meanwhile**—manufacturing executives said they expected modest industrial growth by the end of the year. But high

inventories would take time to clear, and more jobs could disappear as companies scrambled to cut costs.”—Reuters dispatch.

**Gourmet from start to finish (our yearly pun ration)**—With stainless steel kitchens getting popular among high-end buyers, niche products are springing up. Like the stainless steel cleanser spray that offers a choice of four fragrances and an olive-oil base. \$12 a can.

**Big bro will fix the ticket—Florida**—Gov. Jeb Bush signed a bill that could extend the deadline for cleaning up the Everglades by 10 years despite objections from environmentalists and a judge’s warning that the new law may violate federal

agreement.—News dispatch.

**A McDonald atop the pyramid?**—For this ignoramus, it was an eye-opener. Ed Vuliam, correspondent for the *Observer*, London, describes the ancient city of Ur in southern Iraq as “one of the greatest wonders of civilization.” He adds, “Long before the rise of the Egyptian, Greek, and Roman empires, it was here that the wheel was invented and the first mathematical system developed. Here the first poetry was written.”

Some aid workers and a single U.S. officer told Vuliam of the vandalizing of Ur by U.S. forces. The site is marked by an early pyramid. Immediately adjacent to it, the Pentagon is mapping a good-sized airfield and troop base.

# Pittsburgh protesters: jail cops who killed student

BY PETE MUSSER

PITTSBURGH—Opponents of police brutality gathered at Langley High School May 22 to discuss the fight for justice for Dion Lee Hall, a student at the school who was killed by the police May 9. The meeting was called by People Against Police Violence (PAPV) and included Langley students as well as members and organizers of Light House Church, Urban Youth Action, and the Community Empowerment Association, Inc.

“The fight [against police violence] didn’t end with the civil rights movement. We have a fight today,” said Renee Wilson, a PAPV spokeswoman. “If you want Dion’s death to mean something, you have to make a change.”

At the meeting, attended by 40 people, anyone who wanted to speak was encouraged to do so. Luqmaan Salaam, of the Community Empowerment Association, said the police protect property interests, and cited the behavior of cops in this city as evidence that Black people “do not have a social contract, but an antisocial contract with this government.”

By a majority show of hands near the meeting’s end, the high school and college age crowd agreed to begin a petition campaign calling for charges to be brought against the cops involved in Hall’s death, and to organize a march with that demand. PAPV has tentatively set the march for June 7.

According to the cops’ account, on the evening of May 9, Hall robbed Little Rico’s Pizza, shot a female bystander in the arm, and then fled to hide in a van parked on Hillsboro Street only one block away. Four cops, including two plainclothes, responded to shots fired at Little Rico’s. After questioning witnesses who, they claim, described the suspect as a young Black man who had covered his face, they searched the area.

The police claim that when three of the cops approached the van, they heard a shot from inside. One officer fired three times at close range through a window of the van. The police then pulled back and the SWAT team was called. Two hours later, the police SWAT team threw several flash-bang grenades into the van. When they opened the door, they found Hall dead.

Police have denied responsibility for Hall’s death, claiming he shot himself in the head with a .357 revolver.

Witnesses dispute the cops’ story, saying Hall crawled into the van after being shot by the cops.

Family, friends, classmates, and neighbors in Hall’s community of Sheraden, who

have spoken to the press, have expressed shock and disbelief at the claims that Hall would commit armed robbery or kill himself.

“Dion would never have killed himself. That’s them [police] trying to cover up their mistake,” said Michelle Longstreth, Hall’s stepmother.

By all accounts, Hall was a talented athlete and football star who at 17 was already being scouted by football programs from the University of Pittsburgh, Ohio State University, and others.

The insistence by police that Hall killed himself has also brought them into conflict with the Allegheny county coroner’s office. The coroner’s report made no mention of the self-inflicted wound the police claim killed Hall. The report states that Hall died of a gunshot wound to the head, and received a second wound, in the back, from a police bullet.

On May 12, acting police chief Charles Moffat said ballistics tests on bullet fragments recovered from Hall’s head wound prove the fatal shot did not come from an officer’s weapon. Allegheny County Coroner Cyril Wecht called Moffat’s claim “premature,” saying there was no evidence to prove that the shot that killed Hall was not, in fact, fired by a cop.

Wecht also said the police deliberately destroyed evidence at the scene to cover themselves. The cops, Wecht said, were motivated by the “legitimate but selfish” desire to clear themselves when they removed the .357 they claim was in Hall’s hand, and the blanket they claim Hall was hiding under, before the scene could be photographed. Wecht insisted that only the Coroner’s Office had the authority to “remove or transfer articles related to that body.” The cops then ordered the city fire department to spray down the crime scene to “wash away the blood,” they claim.

“It’s entirely possible that the bullet slug was in the blood,” Wecht said, referring to the shot that killed Hall. “The slug may have been washed down a sewer.”

Hall’s death comes in the wake of the deaths of four other Black youths and men at the hands of police this year: Michael Hunter, 24, shot by Pittsburgh police on September 7, 2002; Bernard Rogers, 26, gunned down by Pittsburgh Housing Authority cops on November 15; Charles Dixon, 43, asphyxiated by Mt. Oliver and Pittsburgh police on December 21; and Michael Ellerbe, 12, shot to death by Pennsylvania State Police on Christmas Eve in Uniontown.

PAPV has demanded the cops face criminal charges in each of these cases.



Some 200 people marched in Pittsburgh March 22 against police brutality. Several actions have been organized in the city to demand that criminal charges be brought against the cops involved in recent killings of Black youth.

## — 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —



June 16, 1978

The campaign by federal, state, and city officials to slash the real wages and union rights of more than 200,000 New York municipal workers reached a new peak June 5 when negotiations were completed on a proposed new two-year contract.

“There is no question that I had hoped to do better,” complained Mayor Edward Koch about the new pact.

But the city’s labor-hating media could barely suppress its delight with the agreement. “The fact is,” a *New York Times* editorial gloated, the city “has negotiated its workers into a gradual reduction of their real income while persuading them to invest significant portions of it in bonds that banks and private citizens would not buy.”

And Sen. William Proxmire, at June 6 hearings on federal loan guarantees, agreed that the increases in the pact were “modest.” Proxmire added, “It is cruel that it has to come out of the hides of the workers, but that’s the way it is.”

With inflation soaring at the rate of 10 percent this year alone, the new agreement offers city workers a misery wage increase of 5.5 percent *over the next two years!*

This is far below the national average increases now being negotiated. It is way under even the tight-fisted 5.5 percent ceiling on *annual* wage increases President Carter is demanding from federal employees.

City workers have not yet accepted the “meager” contract. But a propaganda barrage by the big-business media, Democratic and Republican politicians, and union politicians, is underway to convince them that they should.



June 15, 1953

U.S. bombs and napalm have burned and blasted Korea to cinders and left millions of civilians—men, women, and children—corpses or mangled cripples.

“How much more ‘liberation’ can the people of Korea stand?” asked Charles Moore, United Press correspondent, on Jan. 8, 1951, when the war has been in progress less than six months.

“The Korean equivalent of John Q. Public is taking a terrific beating because of the war. His home has been destroyed. His job has disappeared because factories were destroyed. He and his family have become ragged, cold, hungry wanderers. It is a hard fact but true fact that most of the destruction was done by the Americans....”

The massive destruction of every city, town and village in the area occupied by the north Korean and Chinese armies—which in the first stage of the war included most of south Korea—was the result of a deliberate policy of U.S. “strategic bombing.”

U.S. “liberation” has meant death to more than two million Korean civilians—hundreds of thousands of them from that most terrible of all weapons, napalm—flaming jellied gasoline that literally fries its victims to death.

A recent survey made in Korea by Dr. Howard A. Rusk, of the New York University Bellevue Medical Center and an associate editor of the *New York Times*, tells of ten million homeless in Korea; a hundred thousand war orphans in need of homes and medical care; 300,000 needy war widows.

This is what has made the word “liberation” as mouthed by American leaders a word of horror to the world.

### From Pathfinder

#### **Cuba and the Coming American Revolution**

by Jack Barnes

Published for the 40th anniversary of the Cuban people’s victory at the Bay of Pigs in 1961, this book is about the struggles of working people in the imperialist heartland, the youth who are attracted to them, and the example set by the people of Cuba that revolution is not only necessary—it can be made. **\$13.00**

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# U.S. hands off Iran!

Washington has accelerated its course of aggression against Iran. The U.S. rulers’ aim is to use military threats to pressure Tehran into buckling to their demands and, if they deem it necessary, to bomb Iran’s nuclear facilities in order to destroy its capacity to build nuclear weapons. Unlike the conflict between competing imperialist blocs that broke out over control of Iraq and the strategic oil and mineral platform it sits on, there are no disputes among the main imperialist powers on Washington’s moves toward an attack on Iran. The results of the Évian G-8 summit provide ample proof that Berlin, Paris, Tokyo and other imperialist powers support the U.S. rulers’ position that Tehran is building nuclear weapons, that it has acquired delivery systems from north Korea and Russia, and that it must be stopped by all means.

At the summit, U.S. president George Bush also obtained agreement for condemning north Korea for its nuclear weapons program. But for now, Washington and Tokyo are holding off from planning a military assault on the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. They have no simple solutions in that region. Washington has decided to begin testing new ground-penetrating nuclear weapons for possible strikes against north Korea’s deep underground bunkers. It is also repositioning its troops in the Korean peninsula south of the “demilitarized zone,” that is, away from easy targeting by north Korean artillery.

Washington is seeking to prevent Tehran from acquiring nuclear weapons before it gets close to that point, leaving the Iranian regime at a strategic disadvantage and vulnerable to the nuclear powers surrounding it.

A U.S. military assault on Iran’s nuclear facilities—not an invasion—is the most likely turn of events as the White House pursues another target on its “axis of evil.”

Since the 1979 insurrection that toppled the U.S.-backed Shah of Iran—whose dictatorial regime had been a pro-imperialist bulwark in the Mideast and southwest Asia—Washington has set on a course of overthrowing the government dominated by the ayatollahs. The Islamic clerics usurped the leadership of the revolutionary movement of Iranian working people because of previous betrayals of the working class and its allies by Stalinism. The capitalist government that came to power, while it has come into conflict with U.S. imperialism, has eroded most of the gains of the 1979 revolution. Today, with Iran far removed from the momentum of that popular uprising, the regime has continued to evolve in a reactionary direction. Washington, however, still considers this government a thorn on its side that it intends to remove.

Some among U.S. ruling circles have argued for fostering an uprising inside Iran. But most in Washington don’t believe that’s in the cards. The U.S. rulers’ goal is not to return the shah, which is politically ruled out, but to help bring about a regime, even if it is bourgeois nationalist, that will work with Washington to safeguard, instead of hindering, imperialism’s interests in the region. Toward that end, the U.S. government is using many means,

including the “nuclear nonproliferation” club and cultivating a relationship with the People’s Mujahedeen, an antigovernment Iranian guerrilla group that is based in Iraq, had cozy relations with the Saddam Hussein regime, and was on Washington’s list of “terrorist” organizations until April.

At the same time, the U.S. rulers are pressuring Tehran to help police the region on behalf of imperialist interests under the banner of “fighting terrorism.” Their real target today is not Al Qaeda but the Lebanon-based Hezbollah, which is backed by Tehran.

The White House has no illusions it can turn the current Iranian regime into a reliable Mideastern gendarme like the shah was. But they sense weakness because of Tehran’s continuing concessions and its apparent state of denial, and thus unpreparedness, that it faces a U.S. attack.

The only thing the imperialist rulers respect is determined resistance and strength. History shows that if you give imperialism the tip of your finger, it will take your hand. That is what Washington is doing now.

In these objectives—destroying Tehran’s nuclear weapons capacity and rolling up Hezbollah—the interests of Washington and Tel Aviv coincide. That is why the Israeli regime is now making some concessions to the Palestinians. It is trying to work with the U.S. government to accomplish these broader goals of imperialism in the region.

The Iranian ruling class refuses to act as if this is what’s unfolding and may continue to do so until a U.S. assault materializes.

At the same time, Iran is becoming an increasingly modern society, and the “Islamic fundamentalist” current that dominates the regime has a hard time preventing that process. Discussions and debates on the status of women, cultural events like the Tehran and other book fairs, and changes in everyday life like the increasing sight of young couples holding hands in public are signs of the difficulty in imposing “religious law” at this stage in humanity’s evolution.

What working people in Iran need is political space and time to make breakthroughs and eventually develop a leadership that can lead workers and farmers to power when the next opportunity arises. Key to such a development is not only what happens inside the country, but above all what unfolds outside Iran: the evolution of the class struggle around the world.

In this situation, the obligation for class-conscious workers in the United States and other countries is to keep our fire on Washington and other imperialist powers preparing an assault on Iran.

We urge you to join in opposing the imperialist war drive against Iran by explaining the issues and stakes involved at public forums and social protest actions, selling the *Militant*, *New International*, and Pathfinder books during such activities as well as on the job, at plant gates, on campuses and in working-class communities.

Hands off Iran!

# French troops out of Congo!

The United Nations Security Council has approved sending up to 1,000 French troops to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The stated reason for the deployment, “peace-keeping,” could not be further from the truth. Paris is one of the oldest and most brutal imperialist powers in Africa. The more than 9,000 French soldiers stationed throughout its former colonies on the continent, whether regular forces or the hated Foreign Legion, are there for one and only one reason—to protect the economic interests of French finance capital. French corporations enjoy an export market in Africa worth more than \$16 billion annually.

Paris’s UN diplomat made it clear that French troops sent to Congo expect to “take all necessary means—including force.” Paris already has 4,000 of its troops in Ivory Coast, a former French colony, doing just that—using force to put down opposition to an unpopular regime, one that can be counted on to defend Paris’s interests in that country. Hundreds of thousands of mostly Ivorian youth have demonstrated against the armed presence of the former colonial power in their country. They marched earlier this year through the capital chanting “Chirac! Assassin!”

The French rulers have gone to great lengths to put a human face on their new UN mandate to shed African blood. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, an African, made the appeal for French intervention. Paris has tried to assure the governments of Rwanda and Uganda, who back the opposition to the Congo regime and are wary of the presence of French troops on their borders, that the French intervention will be limited to Congo’s eastern provinces and will end in September. In addition, Chirac demagogically postured as caring for millions of impoverished Africans, stating that “closing the wealth gap” between Africa and other countries was his top priority.

What imperialist hypocrisy! Paris—along with Washington, London, Brussels, and Lisbon—is among the principal exploiters of the African toilers, responsible for deepening this “wealth gap.”

The French rulers, however, face a growing challenge from their American competitors in Africa. Strengthening Washington’s standing in Africa is the real aim of the Bush administration’s “Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief” and former U.S. president William Clinton’s “Africa Growth and Opportunity Act,” which was recently extended by Congress. U.S. oil firms are aggressively competing for control of oil exploration, processing, and marketing in a number of African nations.

Willing to let Paris do the dirty work in Congo, Washington even used its influence to pressure African countries in the region to accept the intervention by French troops. The U.S. rulers want to leave open the option to intervene under the guise of “fixing things up” if the French troops can’t “do the job.” Washington has used that tactic effectively, and repeatedly, in Yugoslavia and elsewhere.

The slaughter of an estimated 3 million civilians in the five-year-long civil war is being used as the cover for the deployment of French troops to Congo. The imperialist powers have engaged in an obscene competition of breast beating over the “failure” to act to stop the deaths of millions during the Rwanda civil war.

But the roots of the fratricidal wars throughout Africa lie in the legacy of colonial rule and imperialist exploitation. The borders of African nations were drawn and redrawn based on the interests of the colonial powers—often dividing Africans who shared the same lands, language, and customs for thousands of years. These divisions were reinforced by granting privileges to one group against the other as part of their divide-and-rule tactics. This legacy remains a source of conflict and an obstacle to workers and farmers who oppose imperialist domination.

To join the fight to overcome these divisions and unite workers and farmers against the legacy of colonial rule and imperialist domination working people should call for the cancellation of Africa’s foreign debt, oppose the deployment of French troops, and demand: *All imperialist troops out of Congo and the rest of Africa now!*

# U.S.-Israeli axis

Continued from Page 7

Nabil Amr, according to the May 30 *Wall Street Journal*. “It’s a good preparation for next week’s summit.”

Signaling the Palestinian Authority’s position that the U.S.-sponsored plan should be approved as is, Amr had stated earlier, “We are ready to implement the road map as one package without any changes.”

The U.S.-orchestrated plan sets a timetable for establishing an independent Palestinian state by 2005 alongside Israel. It does not specify what its borders will be, whether it will include part of Jerusalem that Palestinians claim as their capital, or what will happen to the hundreds of Zionist settlements that dot the entire West Bank and Gaza.

According to a summary released to the press, the draft accord requires Tel Aviv to end attacks on Palestinians, halt further expansion of settlements in the occupied territories, and withdraw from lands the IDF has occupied since September 2000, as short-term concessions.

The Palestinian Authority is supposed to enforce an “unconditional cessation of violence” against the Israeli regime, resume “security cooperation” with Tel Aviv, “restructure” its police forces, and carry out a “comprehensive political reform,” including elections and a new constitution—under terms that Washington deems acceptable.

Palestinian prime minister Mahmoud Abbas told Israeli TV May 30 that Palestinian security forces would be ready to take Sharon up on his offer to hand over parts of the West Bank and Gaza within “two to three weeks.” According to the May 30 *New York Times*, Muhammad Dahlan, Abbas’s security chief, has begun reconstituting some Palestinian police units with help from the CIA.

Abbas also stated that he hoped to reach a cease-fire agreement with Hamas and other Palestinian groups shortly. Abdel-Aziz Rantisi, a top Hamas leader, said his organization was still discussing the proposal. A central leader of Islamic Jihad, another Palestinian group, offered a conditional cease-fire. The Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, another organization that has claimed responsibility for suicide bombings, said it would continue attacks.

Abbas also told *Yediot Ahronot* that the Palestinian Authority will not use force against Hamas as it did in 1996. “We are not going backward,” he said. “A civil war—never.”

The announced Israeli measures still fall short of Palestinian demands that Israel pull its troops back immediately to the lines of September 2000. Abbas has also urged Sharon to freeze settlements and lift restrictions on Yasir Arafat.

Abbas was appointed prime minister at the end of April by the Palestinian Authority, a body with limited

Continued on Page 15

## Further reading

Washington's Assault on Iraq  
**Opening Guns of World War III**

In *New International* no.7

By Jack Barnes

The feature article in this issue of *New International* explains that the devastation of Iraq in the 1990–1991 Gulf War did not lead to the dawn of a new world order. The war held a mirror to the declining capitalist world order and accelerated its contradictions. It sounded the opening guns of sharpening conflicts and class battles that will decide whether the horrors of World War III are inflicted on humanity or a road is opened by working people to a socialist future of international human solidarity.

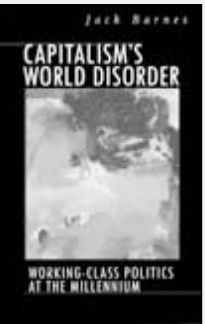
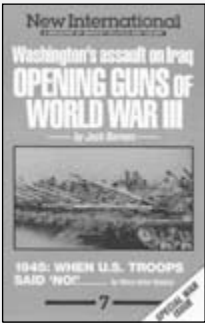
Other articles tell the hidden story of the GI revolt at the end of World War II, when U.S. troops refused to allow themselves to be used to crush spreading anticolonial struggles, and discuss the roots of the militarization drive Washington set in motion at the end of the 1970s. \$12

## Capitalism's World Disorder

Working-Class Politics at the Millennium

By Jack Barnes

Today's spreading economic and social crisis and acts of imperialist aggression are not the product of something gone wrong, Barnes explains, but the lawful workings of capitalism. Yet the future can be changed by the united struggle and selfless actions of workers and farmers conscious of their power to transform the world. Also available in French and Spanish. \$23.95



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## CORRECTION

A photo caption on page 14 of last week’s issue incorrectly identified the date and location of a labor protest in France. The photo, depicting a contingent of steelworkers, was taken at a demonstration in Marseille on May 13.



# Tel Aviv makes concessions to Palestinians

Continued from Page 14

control over a patchwork of territory in the West Bank and Gaza. This followed demands by Tel Aviv and Washington for “political reform,” aimed at isolating Arafat, the central leader of the Palestine Liberation Organization. Both Sharon and Bush have stated publicly they will not negotiate with Arafat at the table. Abbas has publicly condemned attacks on the Israeli government.

## Washington’s goals

Arafat “had a chance to lead and didn’t,” Bush told reporters at a May 29 White House press conference before he left for a trip to Europe and Middle East. This unambiguous stance by Washington has established a precedent that the U.S.

rulers have a say in the makeup of the Palestinian leadership.

As he made it clear during the summit of the G-7 imperialist powers—which met June 2 in Évian-les-Bains, France, along with Moscow—Bush aims to use his Middle East trip to push for similar goals as those he proclaimed in France, while posing as a harbinger of peace. These objectives include getting wider support for Washington’s drive to stop the governments of Iran and north Korea from developing nuclear weapons.

Washington is focusing on these goals after having accomplished its main aim in Iraq—ousting the Saddam Hussein regime and taking over the country. It is now using this reality to pursue its further aims in the region, which include pacifying the

Palestinian resistance and dealing blows to the Iranian regime.

Prior to the Aqaba gathering, Bush headed to the resort town of Sharm el Sheikh in Egypt, where he met with leaders of Arab regimes to maximize chances of their cooperation along these lines.

Even though Bush’s Mideast “peace” plan is cosponsored by the European Union, as well as the bureaucratic regime in Moscow, no representatives of these governments were scheduled to be present at the Aqaba summit.

In another sign of the ongoing conflicts between the major imperialist powers over markets and domination in the Middle East, French foreign minister Dominique de Villepin met May 26 with Yasir Arafat, ignoring Washington and Tel Aviv’s calls to boycott meetings with the Palestinian leader.

“Israel has to stop military operations, settlement activities, withdraw its forces and release prisoners,” de Villepin said. “It is important for the Palestinians to stop any kind of violence.”

## Israel, Iran, and Hezbollah

The Israeli regime shares Washington’s openly proclaimed goals of stopping the Iranian government from developing nuclear weapons and of doing away with the ability of “terrorist” groups—especially Hezbollah—to strike at Zionist targets.

The imperialist powers are pursuing this course, as Washington reopened its consulate in Beirut, Lebanon, May 30, after being closed for two decades.

Long before the White House focused its propaganda mill on branding Tehran a nuclear threat, Tel Aviv was advocating such a course by the imperialist powers.

“Iran under the ayatollahs now poses the most ominous danger to our region and to the world,” then—Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu said in January 1998. Netanyahu, now a minister in Sharon’s cabinet, pointed to what he said were Iranian efforts to acquire nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles.

The Israeli defense ministry appointed a team at the time to monitor four points, according to Reuters: “Supply of equipment to the Iranian-backed Hezbollah guerrilla group in south Lebanon; support of terrorism against Israel; opposition to the peace process; and non-recognition of the existence of the state of Israel.”

Tel Aviv and Washington have accused Tehran of not only using its nuclear en-

ergy plants for weapons development, but of acquiring delivery systems mainly through north Korea and, to a lesser degree, Russia.

When the Israeli coast guard seized the Karine-A boat with a 50-ton shipment of weapons that Tehran allegedly supplied for delivery to the Palestinian Authority in Gaza in early 2002, the IDF chief of staff said this was the “most dangerous axis” that threatened to “change the face” of the Israeli-Palestinian struggle, according to the British newspaper *The Guardian*.

“As well as supplying arms and finance, Iran, the Israelis say, is developing a supervisory role over the Palestinian ‘terror,’” the Feb. 2, 2002, *Guardian* continued, “through the exploitation of its existing assets in the arena, mainly the Lebanese Hezbollah, and its new ones, a direct link with Mr. Arafat and the Palestinian Authority, and a recently created Palestinian Hezbollah of its own.”

On May 22, the Israeli navy captured a small fishing boat off Israel’s northern coast sailing from Lebanon to Gaza. Tel Aviv said it was loaded with weapons materials sent by Hezbollah. The Israeli government blamed the alleged smuggling attempt on Arafat.

## Origin of ‘peace’ process

Arafat became president of the Palestinian Authority as a result of the 1993 Israeli-Palestinian accord, signed in Oslo, Norway. That agreement registered the continuing bourgeoisification of the PLO leadership. Growing sections of the PLO officialdom have turned their eyes away from the Palestinian toilers and their allies around the world, looking instead to the United States and other imperialist powers, and to bourgeois nationalist Arab regimes in the region, as “saviors” in the struggle for national self-determination. It also registered the inability of the Israeli state to crush the Palestinian resistance and Tel Aviv’s desire to turn over to the PLO the headache of trying to police Gaza, one of the main centers of Palestinian militancy.

Over the last decade, Washington and Tel Aviv have banked on getting the cooperation of central leaders of the Palestinian struggle to dampen and eventually pacify Palestinian resistance. They have largely failed. That resistance remains the main obstacle in the path of U.S. imperialism and its Israeli allies as they push to implement yet another “peace” agreement.

# G-8 powers threaten N. Korea with inspectors, sanctions

BY PATRICK O’NEILL

Meeting June 1–2 in France, the heads of state of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States—the seven major imperialist powers—resolved to place “arms inspectors” in north Korea if it does not “visibly, verifiably, and irreversibly dismantle” its development of nuclear weapons. They also threatened the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea with further restrictions on its exports.

The decision came two weeks after a vote in the U.S. Congress giving the go-ahead to the Pentagon to develop a new generation of nuclear weapons, some of which are designed to destroy buried military targets.

One of the devices under development is called the “Robust Nuclear Earth Penetrator.” It is expressly designed with north Korea’s defensive military emplacements in mind. Up to now, the Pentagon has not been able to develop a conventional bomb powerful enough to destroy such targets.

The resolution adopted by the G-8 meeting in Évian, France, June 2 was part of a White House campaign to win agreement for the imperialists’ right to seize alleged nuclear and military material on the high seas or in the air. A Spanish naval vessel, working under overall U.S. command in the so-called “war on terror,” did just that to

a north Korean ship last year off the coast of Yemen. They were forced to release it when the government of Yemen protested, explaining that it had contracted to buy the ship’s cargo.

Leading up to and during the G-8 meeting, Bush met Russian president Vladimir Putin and Chinese president Hu Jintao to press the imperialist campaign against Pyongyang. Bush turned down Pyongyang’s proposal for talks with Washington, insisting that representatives from the south Korean and Japanese governments be present, too.

On May 22 Bush and Japanese prime minister Junichiro Koizumi, meeting in Texas, repeated allegations that Pyongyang had caused a “nuclear crisis,” and warned of “tougher measures” if it escalates.

“Japan will crack down more rigorously on illegal activities, and the north Koreans will have to understand that threats and intimidations will have no meaning whatsoever,” said Koizumi. His Liberal Democratic Party has threatened to make it harder for Koreans living in Japan to send cash to the north.

Among the “tougher measures” against north Korea under consideration in Washington, reported the *New York Times*, “is a naval ‘quarantine’ to seize shipments of missiles, drugs and counterfeit money bound from North Korea to foreign markets.”

## LETTERS

### War protest, a ‘terrorist act’

In a major news article the May 18 *Oakland Tribune* reported that “days before firing wooden slugs at anti-war protesters, Oakland police were warned of potential violence at the Port of Oakland by California’s anti-terrorism intelligence center (CATIC), which admits blurring the line between terrorism and political dissent.” The CATIC, which gathers information on political activities in the state and monitors compliance with federal “terror” alerts, defended its April 2 bulletin issued to the Oakland cops. CATIC spokesman Mike Van Winkle explained that “...if you have a protest group protesting a war...being fought against international terrorism, you might have terrorism at that [protest]. You can almost argue that a protest against that is a terrorist act.”

The center, staffed with personnel from the FBI, Defense Intelligence Agency, and other police and spy units, prepared a report for Oakland police use on the April 7 protest organized by Direct Action to Stop the War in front of two shipping companies on the city’s docks. According to the *Tribune*, “...this information painted a monolithic portrait of violent activists. They could be armed with metal bolts, rocks, and Molotov cocktails. They were secretly in cahoots with the longshoremen’s union...and were



bent on shutting down the nation’s fourth largest shipping port.”

Oakland police intelligence unit supervisor Derwin Longmire e-mailed his commanders web postings by leaders of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union, suggesting that “ILWU leaders planned to use the protests to demand arbitration at the port gates and delay going to work.” CATIC spokesman Van

Winkle defended the Oakland police riot on the waterfront, saying that “I’ve heard terrorism described as anything that is violent or has an economic impact. And shutting down a port certainly would have some economic impact. Terrorism isn’t just bombs going off and killing people.”

Faced with a flurry of criticism from civil liberties groups like the

ACLU, state attorney general William Lockyer has backed away from CATIC’s provocative warnings, calling them “inappropriate.” He also disassociated himself from Van Winkle’s comments, and promised “to delineate with some rigor the line between peaceful assembly and criminal activity.” As the *Tribune* notes, “Lockyer [has] stopped shy of saying the California Department of Justice shouldn’t monitor

protesters or issue warnings about their activities.”

Bill Kalman  
Albany, California

### Disagree on Scottish vote

Your piece on the Scottish elections (Vol. 67/18) is totally inadequate, ignoring as it does the importance of the growth of the SSP [Scottish Socialist party] with a pejorative “reformist” label.

Taken along with the Greens we are looking at a major growth in anti-capitalist forces in Scotland—you wouldn’t know that from reading Pete Williamson’s article.

I really don’t need to have the *Militant* sent from the States to read Peter Riddell’s (a right-wing pundit in a Murdoch paper) views.

You also need a bit deeper look at Farmers For Action—going on a demo doesn’t make you automatically left, and their Welsh rep is a Tory candidate.

I’d be happy to write you a rejoinder to Williamson—it might help your readers.

Ken Ferguson  
by e-mail

**The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people.**

**Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.**



# French troops intervene in Congo

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The French government has announced it will send troops to the Democratic Republic of Congo, deploying them in the mineral-rich eastern region. As with many previous imperialist interventions, it is being carried out under the banner of responding to a “humanitarian crisis.”

Washington and London have decided it is in their interests to back Paris’s military move. With their support, the United Nations Security Council voted May 30 to give its blessing to an “emergency multinational force” led by Paris to intervene in the five-year-old civil war in the Congo. The motion gave the imperialist-led force the green light to “take all necessary means”—the UN euphemism for the use of military force.

Paris will lead an initial battalion-strength group of between 1,200 and 1,400 troops, of which up to 1,000 will be French.

The governments of Britain and Belgium will commit troops to the operation, as will South Africa and Pakistan. London is expected to commit about 200 signalers, intelligence and logistics specialists, and possibly a battalion of light infantry.

This will be the second-largest French military intervention in Africa this year. Paris currently has some 9,000 troops deployed in Africa. Since its 1964 assault on the former French colony of Gabon, French imperialism has intervened militarily in Africa about once a year up to the late 1990s.

## Troops in Ivory Coast

To protect French investments in the Ivory Coast, Paris has deployed some 4,000 troops to back the regime of Laurent Gbagbo in that West African country.

The troops are being sent to Congo under the pretext of putting a halt to the five-year civil war there between government forces and those of two main opposition groups, which has resulted in the deaths of as many as 3 million civilians.

French forces will be concentrated in the city of Bunia in the northeastern province, where fratricidal fighting between the ethnic Hemma and Lendu, fostered by the Congolese government and the opposition, has taken hundreds of civilian lives in the past weeks. More than 80 percent of the population of Bunia has fled, including 20,000 civilians who have taken refuge at a compound of the 5,300 UN troops already in the country.

The French troops are supposed to depart on September 1 when a reinforced UN “peacekeeping” force will supposedly relieve them.

The U.S. government, which is increasingly challenging French imperialist economic interests on the continent, is apparently content with Paris taking on this dirty chore. Richard Williamson, the U.S. representative to the United Nations for political affairs, said Washington helped to obtain written support from Uganda and Rwanda, which had opposed French intervention, to support the intervention force. The U.S. government has decided not to deploy troops to take part in the operation, which is under French command.

Earlier this month the Rwandan government described UN plans to send French

troops to Congo as “unwelcome.” It pointed to the role of Paris in supplying weapons to the Hutu-dominated government during the Rwandan civil war in 1993 and 1994. French troops also played a key role in covering the retreat by leaders of that government to Congo (then Zaire), in the face of their impending defeat by forces of the Rwandan Patriotic Front.

One of the opposition groups in Congo, the Union of Patriotic Congolese, has also said it will reluctantly cooperate with the French-led force. The UPC had warned earlier that any French troops in Congo would be considered enemies.

## ‘Human face’ on Paris’ intervention

Paris is working hard to put a human face on its actions in Congo and throughout Africa. To deflect Rwandan opposition, Paris is said to have insisted that the Security Council spell out that the operation is for a fixed duration and in a specific location.

On the day the UN Security Council gave its stamp of approval to French forces to shed African blood, French president Jacques Chirac announced that his government “will make a determined effort at the G-8 summit to raise the issue of growing poverty and conflict in Africa.” Chirac said he regards Africa as “the neglected continent,” and will press for firmer commitments to “close the growing wealth gap” between Africa and the rest of the world.

At the 22nd Franco-African summit, held in Paris in February, Chirac presented himself as a “tireless advocate” for the interest of the 52 African nations that attended. France, he said, was one of Africa’s “real friends.” Over objections from Washington, London, and leaders of the European Union, Chirac invited Zimbabwean president Robert Mugabe to the summit, saying “dialogue was more important than exclusion.”

French imperialism has substantial economic stakes in Africa. The African Franc Zone ties the currencies of 14 West and Central African nations to the French franc, now replaced by the euro. Some 1,500 French companies and affiliates investing in sub-Saharan Africa enjoy an annual export market worth more than \$16 billion.

The current fighting in Congo between forces supporting and opposed to the gov-



At Abidjan airport in January, protesters against French intervention in Ivory Coast confront occupying forces. Some 4,000 French troops are currently defending imperialist interests there, and Paris now has up to 1,000 more soldiers headed to Congo.

ernment in Kinshasa intensified on the day before the UN vote. On May 22 the main opposition group—the Congolese Rally for Democracy—announced its withdrawal from negotiations with the Congolese government in Kinshasa to implement an April 2 agreement brokered in South Africa. The agreement called for establishing a two-year interim government after which elections would be held.

In 1997 the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire, led by Laurent Kabila and supported by the Rwandan government, overthrew the crumbling pro-imperialist regime of Mobutu Sese Seko, which had ruled Congo with an iron fist for more than three decades.

The Alliance rapidly split in the ensuing factional struggle for control of Congo’s vast mineral wealth.

Kabila declared himself president and cracked down on political opponents. In August 1998 he ordered the mostly Tutsi Rwandan military forces who had helped to overthrow Mobutu to leave the country. This action helped precipitate a military rebellion against the regime in Kinshasa.

While the big-business media portrays

the ongoing civil war as a result of age-old “ethnic hatreds,” the underlying cause of the conflict has been the fight by bourgeois forces over land and mineral wealth—the same fundamental reason that the Belgian, French, U.S., and other imperialist powers have repeatedly intervened in Congo over the years.

The rebels, a fractured assortment of groupings calling themselves the Congolese Rally for Democracy (RCD), are based among Rwandan Tutsi forces that had helped Kabila gain power. The governments of neighboring Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi—who had relied on these military forces to defend their borders from opposition groups launching incursions from eastern Congo—threw their support behind the anti-Kabila forces.

By late 1998 the RCD controlled much of the eastern provinces of Congo. It was on the verge of taking the Congolese capital but was turned back after troops from Angola, Zimbabwe, and Namibia intervened and came to the aid of Kabila’s government.

Kabila was killed by one of his bodyguards in January 2001. His son Joseph Kabila is now president.

# U.S. nuclear arms production to resume

BY MICHAEL ITALIE

Both houses of U.S. Congress passed legislation May 22 authorizing the Pentagon to begin research into production of “small” nuclear weapons. Overturning a 10-year-old ban on such activity, Democrats and Republicans teamed up to approve a military spending bill containing the nuclear arms go-ahead by a vote of 98-1 in the Senate and 361-68 in the House of Representatives.

Senate Armed Services chairman John Warner said the bipartisan vote “sends a strong signal throughout the world that we are unified” in what he called “the war against terrorists.” Some U.S. officials have floated the prospect of using such “mini-nukes” to bomb nuclear power facilities in north Korea and other countries targeted by Washington.

The \$400 billion military budget contains an authorization for testing of two new types of weapons: “low-yield” nuclear weapons of five kilotons or less, and “high-yield” arms aimed at destroying heavily fortified bunkers—the so-called Robust Nuclear Earth Penetrator.

Five kilotons is about one-third the force of the bomb the U.S. government used in 1945 to destroy Hiroshima, killing hundreds of thousands of civilians.

Today Washington, the world’s number one nuclear power, maintains an arsenal that includes nuclear weapons with a blast force of several hundred kilotons.

U.S. spending on nuclear weaponry will jump to \$6.4 billion this year, doubling the figure from a decade ago. The increased funding will go toward the purchase of new plutonium cores for nuclear warheads, to restart production of tritium—a gas that increases the force of thermonuclear explosions—and to upgrade nuclear facilities such as Lawrence Livermore in California and Los Alamos in New Mexico.

The *International Herald Tribune* reported in a May 27 article that the Pentagon Nuclear Posture Review, a classified document provided to Congress in 2002, called for a new crop of smaller arms “to defeat emerging threats such as hard and deeply buried targets,” like the fortified bunkers built by the Iraqi army.

The new weapons, the Pentagon report states, could be used against “relocatable targets.” Through radiation and intense

heat, such weapons could be used to destroy caches of biological and chemical weapons of opposing armies.

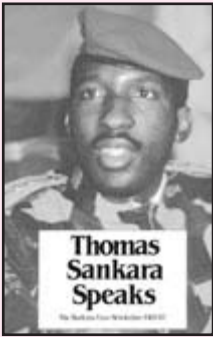
U.S. administration officials, the article continues, view the current nuclear stockpile as “intended to deter a large power like the Soviet Union,” but think such bombs would create too much “collateral damage” and therefore carry too high a political price if used against a smaller country.

The Nuclear Posture Review listed seven nations—China, Russia, Iraq, north Korea, Syria, Iran, and Libya—against whom it recommended the White House be prepared to use nuclear weapons.

The Pentagon report gave several scenarios in which the use of nuclear firepower should be considered: in order to back Israel in a war with its neighbors, against China in a conflict with Taiwan, and to defeat north Korea in a war on the Korean peninsula.

Washington has been getting around the 1994 ban on research and development of new nuclear weapons by classifying its testing as procedures to “modify” existing arms. Sandia Corp., a subsidiary of Lockheed Martin, for example, in 2001 patented an earth-burrowing “penetrator” that could be equipped with a nuclear device. Company president Paul Robinson boasted that “by putting a nuclear warhead on one of those weapons instead of high explosives, you would multiply the explosive power by a factor of more than a million.”

## Thomas Sankara Speaks: The Burkina Faso Revolution



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